

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS



DESKTOP REFERENCE



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY

Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer

December 2009

SHAPING THE FUTURE

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

Table of Contents

Please press the “Control” key and click on the link to be taken to the content within the document.

| SECTION TITLE | PAGE |
|---|------|
| Introduction | 5 |
| Corporate Interns Program Guidance Overview | 6 |
| Purpose | 6 |
| Framework Goals | 7 |
| General Roles and Responsibilities | 7 |
| Overview Chart of Corporate Internship Programs | 11 |
| DOE Federal Career Internship Program (FCIP) | 13 |
| FCIP Program Background | 13 |
| FCIP Program Overview | 13 |
| Basic FCIP Eligibility Criteria | 14 |
| Additional FCIP Eligibility Considerations | 15 |
| Required FCIP Appointment Documentation | 15 |
| FCIP Recruitment and Selection Requirements | 16 |
| Standard Operating Procedures | 16 |
| Workforce Planning | 16 |
| Recruitment/Staffing and Classification Processes | 16 |
| Hiring and Application Process | 18 |
| Rating and Ranking | 19 |
| Veterans’ Preference and Pass-Over | 19 |
| Case-File Management | 19 |
| FCIP Pay Administration and Benefits | 20 |
| Work Schedules | 20 |
| Pay | 20 |
| Student Loan Repayment, Recruitment and Relocation Incentives | 20 |
| Tuition Assistance | 21 |
| Advanced Pay Rates | 21 |
| Annual and Sick Leave | 22 |
| Federal Benefits | 22 |
| Training and Development | 22 |
| Training | 22 |
| Individual Development Plan (IDP) | 22 |
| FCIP Training Philosophy | 23 |
| Training Requirements | 24 |
| Career Development Status Reports | 28 |
| Mentoring | 28 |
| Performance Management | 28 |
| Performance Plans | 28 |
| Within-Grade Increases | 29 |
| Promotions | 29 |
| Justifying Accelerated Promotions | 29 |
| Awards | 30 |
| Other Considerations | 30 |
| Movement Between Positions | 30 |
| Non-Competitive Conversion | 30 |
| Non-Competitive Conversion Documentation | 31 |
| Extensions of FCIP Appointment | 31 |
| Breaks in Program | 32 |
| Separation or Termination of Employment | 32 |
| Probationary Periods | 33 |
| Reduction in Force | 33 |
| Roles and Responsibilities | 33 |
| Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program | 36 |
| PMF Program Background | 36 |

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

| | |
|---|----|
| PMF Program Overview | 36 |
| Basic PMF Eligibility Criteria | 37 |
| Required PMF Appointment Documentation | 38 |
| PMF Recruitment and Selection Requirements | 38 |
| Workforce Planning | 38 |
| Recruitment and Staffing | 38 |
| Hiring and Application Process | 40 |
| Rating and Ranking | 41 |
| Veterans' Preference | 41 |
| Passing over Veterans | 42 |
| Case File Management | 42 |
| PMF Pay Administration and Benefits | 43 |
| Work Schedules | 43 |
| Pay | 43 |
| Student Loan Repayment, Recruitment and Relocation Incentives | 43 |
| Tuition Assistance | 44 |
| Advanced Pay Rates | 44 |
| Annual and Sick Leave | 44 |
| Federal Benefits | 44 |
| Training and Development | 45 |
| Training Requirements | 45 |
| Individual Development Plan | 46 |
| Developmental Assignments | 47 |
| Mentoring | 47 |
| Performance Management | 48 |
| Performance Plans | 48 |
| Within-Grade Increases | 48 |
| Promotions | 48 |
| Justifying Accelerated Promotions | 49 |
| Awards | 49 |
| Other Conditions | 49 |
| Moving Between Positions | 49 |
| ERB Certification and Conversion | 49 |
| ERB Certification and Conversion Documentation | 50 |
| Extensions of PMF appointment | 50 |
| Breaks in Program | 50 |
| Separation or Termination of Employment | 51 |
| Probationary Periods | 51 |
| Reduction in Force | 51 |
| Roles and Responsibilities | 51 |
| Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) | 54 |
| SCEP Program Background | 54 |
| SCEP Program Features | 54 |
| Basic SCEP Eligibility Criteria | 55 |
| Additional SCEP Eligibility Considerations | 56 |
| Required SCEP Appointment Documentation | 57 |
| SCEP Recruitment and Selection Requirements | 57 |
| Standard Operating Procedures | 57 |
| Workforce Planning | 57 |
| Recruitment/ Staffing and Classification | 58 |
| Written Tests and Examinations | 59 |
| Rating and Ranking | 59 |
| Veterans' Preference | 59 |
| Passing over Veterans | 60 |
| Case File Management | 60 |
| SCEP Employment Conditions | 60 |
| Student Verification | 60 |
| Student Working Agreement | 60 |
| Pay Administration and Benefits | 61 |

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

| | |
|---|----|
| Work Schedules | 61 |
| Pay | 61 |
| Student Loan Repayment/Recruitment Incentives | 61 |
| Advanced Pay Rates | 62 |
| Annual and Sick Leave | 62 |
| Federal Benefits | 62 |
| Training and Development | 62 |
| Training Requirements | 62 |
| Performance Management | 63 |
| Performance Plans | 63 |
| Within-Grade Increases | 63 |
| Promotions | 63 |
| Justifying Promotions | 64 |
| Awards | 64 |
| Other Considerations | 64 |
| Establishing Assignments | 64 |
| Non-Competitive Conversion | 64 |
| Non-Competitive Conversion Documentation | 65 |
| Breaks in Program | 65 |
| Separation or Termination of Employment | 66 |
| Probationary Periods | 66 |
| Reduction in Force | 66 |
| Roles and Responsibilities | 66 |
| Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) | 69 |
| STEP Program Background | 69 |
| STEP Program Features | 69 |
| Basic STEP Eligibility Criteria | 70 |
| Additional STEP Eligibility Considerations | 71 |
| Required STEP Appointment Documentation | 71 |
| STEP Recruitment and Selection Requirements | 72 |
| Standard Operating Procedures | 72 |
| Recruitment/Staffing and Classification | 72 |
| Written Tests and Examinations | 73 |
| Rating and Ranking | 73 |
| Veterans' Preference | 73 |
| Passing over Veterans | 74 |
| Case File Management | 75 |
| STEP Employment Conditions | 75 |
| Student Verification | 75 |
| Pay Administration and Benefits | 75 |
| Work Schedules | 75 |
| Pay | 75 |
| Student Loan Repayment/Recruitment Incentives | 75 |
| Advanced Pay Rates | 76 |
| Annual and Sick Leave | 76 |
| Federal Benefits | 76 |
| Training and Development | 76 |
| Training Requirements | 76 |
| Performance Management | 77 |
| Performance | 77 |
| Within-Grade Increases | 77 |
| Promotions | 77 |
| Justifying Promotions | 77 |
| Awards | 78 |
| Number of Appointments | 78 |
| Other Conditions | 78 |
| Establishing Assignments | 78 |
| Separation or Termination of Employment | 78 |
| Probationary Periods | 78 |

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

| | |
|--|-----|
| Reduction in Force | 78 |
| Key Definitions | 79 |
| Exhibits – Checklist Descriptions | 80 |
| Exhibit 1 - FCIP Checklist | 81 |
| Exhibit 2 - PMF Checklist | 82 |
| Exhibit 3 - SCEP Checklist | 83 |
| Exhibit 4 - STEP Checklist | 84 |
| Exhibit 5 - Mobility Agreement Form (required for FCIP and PMF) | 85 |
| Appendices | |
| Appendix A – Grade Conversion Chart | 86 |
| Appendix B – Student Career Experience Program Working Agreement | 87 |
| Appendix C – Promotion Justification Sample Document | 94 |
| Appendix D – Individual Development Plan Form | 96 |
| Appendix E – Quarterly FCIP Report Form | 97 |
| Appendix F – FCIP Participant Agreement | 101 |
| Appendix G – Mentor Agreement | 102 |
| Appendix H – Supervisor Agreement | 103 |
| Appendix I – Detail/Rotational Supervisor Agreement | 104 |
| Appendix J – Developmental Assignment Contract Form | 105 |
| Appendix K – Certification of Developmental Assignment | 107 |
| Appendix L – PMF Job Announcement Form | 108 |
| Appendix M – PMF ERB Board Sheet Justification | 109 |
| Appendix N – Reference Check Sheet | 110 |

Legal References:

| | |
|--|---|
| 5 CFR § 213.3202 (student educational employment program) | 5 CFR § 213.3202(b)(15) (exemptions from written tests) |
| 5 CFR § 302 (employment in the excepted service) | 5 CFR § 890.102, 5 CFR § 831.201, 842.105, 213.3202(a)(13)(i) (health benefits) |
| 5 U.S.C. § 3301 (civil service examination, selection & placement) | 5 CFR § 362 (Presidential Management Fellows Program) |
| 5 CFR § 315 (career and career conditional appointments) | 5 CFR § 213.3202(a)(14) and 5 CFR § 213.3202(b)(19) (tenure) |
| 5 U.S.C. § 3110 (anti-nepotism act) | Executive Order 12015 – Student Career Experience Program |
| 5 CFR § 300.603 (time in grade) | Executive Order 13162 – Federal Career Intern Program |
| 5 CFR § 302.101 (exemptions from rating and ranking) | |

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Energy (DOE) understands that people are its most important resource when accomplishing its multifaceted mission. To maintain its readiness and overall workforce vitality, the Department must continually generate a pipeline of talent to replenish and renew its workforce. Given the need to establish and successfully manage the development of our workforce pipeline, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer has developed this desktop reference on how to plan, execute, and manage four key entry-level and mid-career excepted service hiring programs:

- Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP)
- Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program
- Student Career Experience Program (SCEP)
- Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP)

Each program offers hands-on work experience to high school students, college students, and recent college graduates (both undergraduate and graduate), while providing the opportunity to network with other professionals and gain an understanding of DOE's mission. Although there are other internship programs within the Department, all of these programs should be integrated under a single framework with the organization's workforce planning and talent acquisition strategies to assure the DOE workforce is ready for future challenges. The purpose of this reference book is to assist managers, supervisors, and human resources professionals in that effort.

This reference book serves as a "one-stop shop" for the consistent application of DOE's corporate internship programs. This document will be managed and administered by the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy's Employment Solutions Division (HC-13) within the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer (HC). HC will continue to work with headquarters and field organizations to provide consultative insight and support toward the creation and implementation of these corporate internship programs. By utilizing this desktop reference and these programs to meet DOE talent needs, an extensive workforce pipeline can be created to focus DOE's efforts to plan, manage, and develop its human capital both now and in the future.

OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide specific operational guidance to human resource professionals, managers, administrative officers, hiring officials, and program participants utilizing the DOE's excepted service hiring programs. This reference book will provide an enterprise-wide operational umbrella regarding the development and execution of a corporate workforce pipeline system for the DOE. The overall goal of this reference book is to provide the foundation for a consistent and integrated approach to workforce planning and talent acquisition through the use of the following programs:

- Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP)
- Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program
- Student Career Experience Program (SCEP)
- Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP)

OVERALL GOALS

This desktop reference seeks to build a better understanding about the values, characteristics and differences of each of these programs. This goal requires the development of a collaborative corporate philosophy concerning the implementation of these four programs. The following principles must be applied to assure the success of the corporate internship programs framework:

- Managers and human resources offices must be accountable for efficient and effective human resources (HR) decision-making that supports the DOE mission in accordance with merit system principles pertaining to the implementation of special hiring programs.
- All hires made under any of the excepted service hiring programs must be consistent with federal statutes and regulations, as well as OPM and DOE guidance.
- DOE human capital seeks a strategic, corporate, and integrated approach when executing the following functions in support of these programs:
 - 1) Workforce and succession planning
 - 2) Recruitment and marketing
 - 3) Hiring and on-board processing
 - 4) Training and development
- Human Resources (HR) Offices must be monitoring, tracking, and sharing data with the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer as it pertains to:
 - 1) Projections on proposed special hiring program usage
 - 2) Reports on actual special hiring program usage
 - 3) Proposed recruitment event participation
 - 4) Workforce plans and succession plans
 - 5) Veterans' Preference adjudication processes for special hiring programs

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

- Participation in the coordination and execution of recruitment, marketing, and outreach events and initiatives
- Fostering an internship network that allows open lines of communication, sharing of ideas, and exposure to various DOE lines of business.
- Providing program participants substantive work assignments for their professional development as well as documenting and utilizing an Individual Development Plan (IDP) to track learning progression.

GENERAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The success of each of the corporate internship programs is dependent on the full support and commitment of senior leadership and field management. Collaboration across organizational lines, a willingness to provide necessary resources, as well as managerial and supervisory accountability and transparency are all key practices to ensure program effectiveness. The following section outlines strategic roles and responsibilities for implementing the FCIP, PMF, SCEP, and STEP. Functional roles and responsibilities can be found in the section dedicated to each of the specific programs.

DOE Senior Leadership

- Provide visible and continuing personal engagement, commitment, and resource support (both personnel and monetary) for all of the corporate internship programs.
- Identify and promote any necessary strategic and operational changes as needed to address workforce imbalances.
- Play a personal role in helping the Department present and market its mission and image to key constituencies, organizations, academia, the public, and the applicants.
- Hold direct reports accountable for achieving acceptable performance results regarding program usage and implementation as part of their role in effectively managing human capital.
- Encourage the use of personnel staff to serve as mentors and coaches.
- Serve as a senior level champion for all the program participants in your organization.

Chief Human Capital Officer (HC-1)

- Establish strategic direction and foster open lines of communication with DOE Leadership to promote and enhance the corporate internship programs framework.
- Assure a representative workforce through inclusion and leveraging of diversity.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

Office of Strategic Planning and Policy, Employment Solutions Division (HC-13)

- Lead efforts to coordinate meetings, share information, and provide guidance regarding program usage and strategies.
- Collaborate with program and field offices in strategic marketing and recruitment execution in an effort to meet workforce needs.
- Develop and maintain program policy and procedural framework around each of the excepted service hiring programs and activities that guide managers, participants, and other stakeholders in the execution of effective recruitment, hiring, and training processes.
- Conduct program oversight activities to ensure regulatory and agency compliance as well as modify program procedures to ensure effectiveness.
- Develop and share contacts with colleges, universities, minority/non-minority professional organizations, and other recruitment sources.
- Design core training frameworks.
- Design metrics to assess effectiveness and efficiency as it relates to career fairs.

Local Human Resources Servicing Office

- Maintain responsibility for executing the recruitment strategy for developing a pool of applicants.
- Adjudicate veterans' preference as part of the competitive process.
- Deliver staffing and classification services to selecting official prior to announcing a job vacancy.
- Post job announcements for vacant positions.
- Provide assistance to hiring managers in the development of interview questions and/or the development of rating criteria.
- Issue tentative and/or final job offer letters.
- Process all personnel actions including, but not limited to, hires, promotions, terminations, reassignments, transfers, recruitment incentives, conversions, etc.
- Maintain case file on all intern participants to assure completion of program requirements prior to non-competitive conversion.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

Office of Learning and Workforce Development (HC-20), Enterprise Training Services (ETS)

- Provide for the development of a core training curriculum and collaborate with stakeholders in the development, execution, and tracking methodology of training and development experiences for program participants.
- Oversee the training and developmental requirements for each of the programs.
- Collaborate with the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13) on training requirements.
- Ensure the availability of training courses/activities as it pertains to the core curriculum.
- Provide direction and guidance on training and development implementation to HR offices, managers, and program participants.
- Ensure centralized training activities with field and headquarters offices.
- Assist HC-13/Corporate Intern Coordinators (CIC)/program participants/managers/ program and field offices in coordinating rotational assignments among headquarters and field offices.
- Ensure training activities as outlined in the IDPs are tracked and support the goals as noted in the Plans.

Hiring Program/Field Office

- Appoint a Corporate Intern Coordinator(s) within the office to assist in planning, coordinating, and executing recruitment, hiring, training, and day-to-day program management of each special employment program (FCIP, PMF, SCEP, and STEP) associated with the corporate internship program's framework.
- Arrange for computer, office space, assistive technology, and travel/purchasing cards (if necessary) for each participant.
- Ensure managers, mentors, and coaches possess the necessary technical expertise to deliver the required technical training suitable for a participant's development.
- Administer payroll support (time and attendance) and travel for the participants.
- Work in collaboration with HC-13 to perform workforce and succession planning to assure that corporate intern programs meet mission-critical skill needs.
- Assure the hiring of quality candidates.
- Develop interview questions and rating process in concurrence with the local servicing human resources office.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

- Hold leaders/managers and supervisors accountable for the development and mentoring of all program participants.
- Provide necessary orientation to organizations and arrange for any site-specific security, safety, and other related briefings for participants.
- Ensure that managers develop work assignments that are challenging and meaningful.
- Ensure development and submission of an IDP that meets training and learning requirements and outlines career progression where specified by the special employment program guidance.
- Support marketing and branding efforts designed by HC-13 to promote and enhance internship programs.

Program Participants

- Submit all necessary paperwork for timely hiring.
- Take the initiative in requesting or identifying the necessary living and transportation arrangements needed to report for work.
- Define broad professional goals and identify specific training classes in developing an IDP.
- Meet regularly with the supervisor of record and/or designated supervisor/team leader to establish performance expectations and receive feedback on performance.
- Maintain academic and/or vocational fitness for duty.
- Show initiative and display professional behavior in all circumstances. Maintain awareness that actions are subject to ethics laws and regulations as specified by the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Executive Orders (EO), and U.S. Code (USC).
- Attend and participate in meetings, activities, and special events arranged by the hiring office, the Corporate Intern Coordinator, or the DOE Corporate Internship Programs Manager.

SUMMARY OF CORPORATE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

The corporate internship programs framework offers hiring managers a unique opportunity to develop their future workforce pipeline with streamlined talent acquisition methods. The chart below provides a summary of the key features and required documentation for each of the programs discussed in this reference book.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

| | <u>FCIP</u> | <u>PMF</u> | <u>SCEP</u> | <u>STEP</u> |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| Administered by | DOE | Office of Personnel Management | DOE | DOE |
| Eligibility | Recent college graduate (within the past three years). | Master's degree recipient. Selected by OPM to participate. | Maintain student status enrolled in a minimum of six semester hours or equivalent. | Maintain student status enrolled in a minimum of six semester hours or equivalent. |
| Primary Length of Appointment | Two years. Requires background investigation prior to start date. | Two years. Requires background investigation prior to start date. | Indefinite, as long as candidate maintains student status and acceptable performance. Requires background investigation prior to start date. | Six months or less. Appointment length may be longer, but requires a background investigation prior to start date (see HSPD-12 guidance). |
| FTE Required | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Grade level eligibility | GS-5, 7, 9 (and equivalent) based on educational requirements and experience. | GS-9, 11, 12 based on educational requirements and experience. | Any grade level depending on educational requirements and experience. | Any grade level depending on educational requirements and experience. |
| Program Availability | Year round | Participants announced once a year in March/April | Year round | Year round |
| Work Schedule | Typically full time | Typically full time | Part-time and full time | Part-time and full time |
| Annual and Sick Leave Accrued | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | <u>FCIP</u> | <u>PMF</u> | <u>SCEP</u> | <u>STEP</u> |
| Benefits | Yes | Yes | Yes, but only if appointed for 1 year or longer | No |

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| Eligible to convert to competitive federal service | Yes, provided candidate completes all training and development requirements within the 2-year appointment period. | Yes, provided candidate completes all training and development requirements within the 2-year appointment period. | Yes, provided candidate completes a total of 640 work hours in a job related to the field of study prior to completing academic degree requirements for graduation. | No, but eligible for non-competitive conversion to the SCEP. |
| Special Restrictions to employment | None. | Must complete Master's degree prior to August 31 of the appointment year. | Participant must be appointed to a job related to academic degree field. | Appointments not to exceed six months if background check is not performed prior to appointment. |
| Required Paperwork | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SF-52 (recruit action) - Résumé - All Position descriptions up to Full Performance Level (FPL) - Official transcripts - SF-52 for student loan repayment and/or recruitment incentive (if offering) - Justification for student loan repayment, recruitment bonus and/or advance in hire (if offered) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SF-52 (recruit action) - Résumé - All Position descriptions up to Full Performance Level (FPL) - Official transcripts - SF-52 for student loan repayment and/or recruitment incentive (if offering) - Justification for student loan repayment, recruitment bonus and/or advance in hire (if offered) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SF-52 (recruit action) - Résumé - Position description - Signed SCEP agreement with academic institution - Official transcripts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SF-52 (recruit action) - Résumé - Position description - Official transcripts |

THE DOE FEDERAL CAREER INTERN (FCIP) PROGRAM

FCIP PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The FCIP is an entry-level Federal hiring and development program designed to serve as a cornerstone in DOE's workforce pipeline development efforts. The Program is one of the key components of the Department's workforce planning strategy. The FCIP features training and developmental opportunities that allow participants to enroll in core training with subsequent training according to the participant's target position.

The FCIP is designed as a 2-year, entry-level and developmental program utilizing an excepted service authority at the GS-5, GS-7, or GS-9 and equivalent levels. This program provides maximum flexibility in recruitment strategy design, targeted recruitment, ease of hiring, and conversion to permanent appointment after completion of program requirements. The FCIP allows recruitment and hiring to be carried out at the local level within the framework provided in this guidance.

After selection is made, the FCIP employee enters into a career development program designed to foster both personal and professional growth. Key developmental components of the DOE FCIP are:

- Orientation
- Common-Core Training
- Individual Development Plans (IDP) designed as a road map for professional and personal development during the program and beyond
- Rotational Assignment(s)
- On-Going Mentoring
- Networking activities and sessions designed to expose the employee to other areas of DOE as well as associate with other DOE interns

FCIP PROGRAM OVERVIEW

| |
|---|
| Must be a college graduate in the past three years to be selected as a DOE FCIP participant. |
| FCIP hire requires the usage of an FTE for an appointment to be made. |
| FCIPs are hired on a 2-year excepted service appointment and are eligible for non-competitive conversion to career-conditional status following successful completion of program requirements. |
| Initial hires can be made at the GS-5, 7, or 9 (and equivalent). FCIPs are not held to time-in-grade restrictions and are eligible for accelerated promotion consideration once every six months. FCIPs are limited to 1 accelerated promotion. |

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

FCIP PROGRAM OVERVIEW (continued)

FCIPs are typically hired with a full performance level equivalent to the GS-13. Any position targeted for a non-supervisory GS-14 or above must be justified, documented and approved by the local HR servicing organization.

Participants are placed on a 2-year developmental training program and must complete training and rotational assignments to ensure they gain the necessary development to reach the full performance level for their position. Participants must complete **all** training requirements to be eligible for non-competitive conversion.

Items required to hire a FCIP student

- SF-52 indicating action to hire a Federal Career Intern
- Official college transcript
- Résumé
- An established position description for all grade levels within the proposed career ladder
- 2-year training and development plan, to be submitted within the first 30 days of appointment
- MOU developed for rotational assignments between DOE and external agencies (recommended).

BASIC FCIP ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants appointed to the FCIP must meet the following basic eligibility requirements:

1. Be at least 18 years of age.
2. Be a United States Citizen.
3. Recent college graduate in the past three years. For information regarding school accreditation, managers should contact their servicing HR office to ensure the school is accredited. If the institution is not accredited, any offer of employment will be invalid pursuant to the OPM Operating Manual for Qualification Standards.
4. Representatives from the servicing HR office may make tentative job offers to students no more than 9 months in advance. For example, if an HR representative is attending a college fair in the fall and identifies an FCIP candidate who is graduating in May of the following calendar year (spring semester), the representative may make a tentative offer. The student must graduate and provide official transcripts indicating the degree has been awarded prior to the effective date of the personnel action. If the student does not graduate within the specified timeframe or produce the required documentation regarding degree completion, the tentative job offer is no longer valid.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

5. The participant must meet personnel suitability and any physical requirements for the position to which they are applying.
6. The participant must meet the OPM Qualification Standards for the series and grade of the position.
7. Male applicants for FCIP born after 12/31/59 who are required to register with the Selective Service under Section 3 of the Military Selective Service Act must be registered or must have registered at the time that they were required to do so in order to be eligible for appointment under this program (5 U.S.C. § 3328(a) and 5 CFR Part 300, Subpart G).

ADDITIONAL FCIP ELIGIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

RELATIVES. Students may work with a relative when there is no direct reporting relationship and the relative is not in a position to influence or control the student's appointment, employment, promotion, or advancement (as per 5 CFR 213.3202 (a)(7)).

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION. U.S. citizens who gained part of their education internationally must have their foreign education interpreted by a credential evaluation service. For specific guidelines regarding this service, please refer to <https://www.opm.gov/qualifications/policy/ApplicationOfStd-04.asp>.

To learn more about foreign education visit the following Department of Education website:
www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ous/international/usnei/us/edlite-visitus-forrecog.html.

REQUIRED FCIP APPOINTMENT DOCUMENTATION

FCIP participants must submit the following documentation to be considered for an appointment:

- OF-612, Optional Application of Federal Employment or résumé.
- Official documentation verifying completion of degree, diploma, or certificate program at an accredited school may include:
 - Official transcript
 - Letter from the Registrar's or Dean's office
- Evidence of good academic standing as determined by the academic institution (generally a GPA of 2.0 or higher).
- If claiming veterans' preference, the submission of a DD-214 or an SF-15 is required to adjudicate veterans' preference.
- Evidence of citizenship.

FCIP RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION REQUIREMENTS

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES. HR offices must establish internal standard operating procedures outlining the specific functions and designated roles and responsibilities that govern at a minimum: job advertisement, application process, and referral and selection under an FCIP appointment. The document should also incorporate how workforce integration strategies will be used to effectively identify occupations targeted for FCIP.

WORKFORCE PLANNING. Although the use of an FCIP appointment is not a guaranteed permanent placement, managers should assess workforce needs followed by their FTE usage to determine if permanent placement is warranted. These assessments must be determined through a workforce planning method that is integrated into the organization's workforce/staffing plan(s). An FCIP appointment shall not be used to fill short-term competency and skill gaps. Any targeting of specific individuals in an effort to circumvent fair and open competition is strictly prohibited. Managers must not target a specific individual for an FCIP appointment, which means that evidence of selections being pre-determined prior to a fair and open competition being held is not permissible.

RECRUITMENT/STAFFING AND CLASSIFICATION. FCIP appointments are made at the GS-5, 7, or 9 (and equivalent) levels. The primary use of FCIP appointments are to hire for key positions that support the mission of the DOE including mission-critical occupations (MCO) (see to 5 CFR 213.3202 (o)(10)(iii)). Some DOE MCO fields are identified as the following:

- Accounting
- Acquisition
- Budget
- Contracting
- Engineering
- Federal Technical Qualification Program (TQP) jobs
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Physical Science

If an occupation is identified as an administrative support function and management wishes to recruit an FCIP Intern for the position, a written justification must be submitted to the servicing HR office prior to commencing the FCIP process. The justification must contain the following information:

- Reason for use of an FCIP authority versus delegated examining (DE) or Merit promotion recruitment
- Demographic data supporting diversification in the talent pool
- Attrition data within the occupational field at the proposed site for hiring the individual
- Use of FCIP authority to determine whether the identified position is critical to the mission of the organization

Additionally, in light of merit system principles, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer requires that all FCIP positions be advertised broadly and/or in targeted recruitment campaigns to ensure fair and equitable access to federal employment opportunities.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

Recruitment for FCIP positions will be conducted primarily by the local servicing HR office and subject matter experts from the hiring office. Requests for assistance with developing recruitment and marketing strategy as well as using corporate recruitment materials can be made to the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer, Office of Strategic Planning and Policy's Employment Solutions Division (HC-13).

The full performance level (FPL) of an FCIP appointment should not exceed the GS-13 or equivalent levels. If the position has an FPL higher than the GS-13 level or equivalent, a justification must be submitted to the DOE headquarters Employment Solutions Division (HC-13). All positions above the GS-13 submitted for review must be non-supervisory positions in nature for consideration. The following documentation must be submitted by the requesting office in an effort to justify an FPL above the GS-13 when using the FCIP hiring authority:

- Position Description
- Description of the organization and its relation to the DOE strategic plan
- Copy of the organization's workforce plan
- Copy of the organization's succession plan with identification of competencies and skills needed in the office
- Proposed employee development (training) plan for the two year program
- Written Justification for the request (to include rationale for the need based on: difficulty in finding mid level talent, unique skills possessed by the potential selectee, filling identified skills gaps, retirement/attrition concerns, etc.)

Additionally, an FPL **cannot** be adjusted after the initial appointment is made. For example, if the initial appointment was at the GS-7 with a GS-12 FPL, the servicing HR office can not adjust the full performance level above the GS-12 after the hire has been made. Increases beyond the originally stated FPL require the establishment of a new position and the advertising of the position through an open competition. As a result, managers and supervisors must submit all position descriptions and statements of differences when the positions are initially classified prior to the recruitment and selection processes.

- NOTE: HR offices must annotate the FPL on the initial appointment SF-50 in the remarks section.

All personnel actions related to an FCIP appointment should incorporate the mandatory statements and authorization codes as set forth in the OPM Guide to Processing Personnel Actions (<http://www.opm.gov/feddata/gppa/gppa.asp> in Chapter 11).

Appropriate appointment citations are as follows:

- (a) Type: Exc Appt; Conv to Exc Apt
- (b) Nature of Action (NOA): 170; 570
- (c) Legal Authority: Sch B.213.3202(o)
- (d) Legal Authority Code: YCM
- (e) Mandatory Remark: "This appointment is intended to continue for 2 years, unless extended up to 1 additional year. Upon satisfactory completion of the internship, you may be noncompetitively converted to a career or career-conditional appointment. If you fail to satisfactorily complete the internship, your employment will be terminated."

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

- (f) Mandatory remark for former competitive service employees afforded replacement rights under 5 CFR Sec. 213.3202(o)(6)(ii): “If your performance is not satisfactory or if you fail to satisfactorily complete the internship, you will be returned to a position at no lower grade or pay than the position you left to enter the Federal Career Intern Program.”

Appropriate codes for conversion to a career or career-conditional appointment:

- (a) Appointment Type: Career; Career-Conditional
- (b) Nature of Action: 100; 500; 101; 501
- (c) Legal Authority: 315.712
- (d) Legal Authority Code: LYP

HIRING AND APPLICATION PROCESS. Although a public notice is not required to fill excepted service positions for programs like the Federal Career Intern Program, merit system principles require that agencies provide fair, open, and equitable access to these types of federal job opportunities. Therefore, the local servicing HR office has several options to assure compliance:

- The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer requires that an FCIP position be advertised for no less than 3 days on USAJobs, established in an open continuous announcement, or advertised using the internet, print media, radio, or television with instructions on how and where candidates should apply. If the office uses the internet or print media, a copy of the advertisement must be filed in the case file to assure proper documentation. The intent is to assure the process is open and fair to all applicants and does not target individuals within the workforce.
 - The USAJOBS posting at a minimum must contain information regarding the position (title and occupational series), area of consideration, salary, qualification requirements and instructions on how to apply.
 - The local servicing HR office must document both the recruitment strategy and the rating and ranking strategy (making sure to adjudicate veterans’ preference).
- Appointments are not subject to Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP) Requirements.

To provide as much latitude and flexibility as possible, each HR office should determine the best venue(s) in terms of FCIP advertisement/notification in addition to USAJobs. Whatever the source(s) maybe, it must be documented and filed in the case file.

Administrative Careers with America (ACWA) requirements apply to FCIP appointments at the GS-5/7 levels depending on the occupational series. A list of ACWA-covered positions is available in the Delegated Examining Handbook located at the following website:

http://www.opm.gov/deu/handbook_2007/deo_handbook.pdf. For positions covered under ACWA, the appropriate assessments or rating schedule must be used. For additional information, managers should consult their servicing HR office.

- If managers want to recruit at the GS-5/7 levels and the position is an ACWA-covered job and the servicing HR office is not ACWA certified, that office must contract OPM to administer ACWA examinations.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

- If a servicing HR office has questions regarding the use and internal procedures relating to ACWA, the Office should contact the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy's Employment Solutions Division.

Managers and staff from program offices **are not** authorized to extend any informal or formal offer of employment. Only servicing HR offices are authorized to make FCIP job offers and appointments. Basic HR functions such as job classification, adjudicating veterans' preference, establishing and issuing referral lists, and tentative and formal job offers are functions that must be performed by the servicing HR office. These functions cannot be re-delegated to management. Managers do not have delegated authority to assume the role and responsibilities designated to HR office via DOE Order 320.1.

RATING AND RANKING. HR offices may utilize either a numerical ranking or category ranking system to evaluate candidates. The system of choice must be noted in a standard operating procedure. The servicing HR offices are responsible for documenting the ranking results in the case file and must ensure the procedures are consistent in the use of all FCIP appointments.

For example, based on the qualification standards used for the position, FCIP applicants must be evaluated to determine eligibility and qualifications for the position. Additionally, participants may be rated and ranked according to one or more of the following qualitative factors such as Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities; Competency assessment; behavioral interviews; or a combination of assessment tools. Procedures must be documented and applied consistently to avoid any appearance of impropriety. For the appropriate method, managers should consult with their servicing HR office.

VETERANS' PREFERENCE AND PASS-OVER. The decision under *Gingery v. Department of Defense*, 550 F.3d. 1347 (Fed.Cir. 2008) issued by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit invalidated an OPM regulation dealing with veterans' preference, since the regulation provided less protection than what was provided for in Federal statute. . Since the FCIP is an excepted service appointment, the Court ruled that selection into the excepted service must be conducted in the same manner and under the same conditions as required for the competitive service. As a result, 5 CFR 302.401(b) under the excepted service was ruled invalid. Therefore, to adjudicate veterans' preference under an FCIP appointment, the HR office must apply the same procedures as used under the competitive process when assessing veterans' preference. Staff should refer to OPM's Vet Guide for additional information: (<http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp#2Ajudicat>).

It is important to note that for 30% or more compensable veterans, the HR office must obtain permission for pass-over from OPM while simultaneously notifying the Office of the Strategic Planning and Policy, Human Capital Policy Division (HC-11) of this course of action. While requesting OPM's approval, the HR office must notify the preference eligible of the proposed pass over, articulated the reason(s) for the pass over, and specify their right to respond.

- This notification must be sent to the preference eligible's last known address.

Managers should consult with their servicing HR office for questions regarding the adjudication process.

CASE FILE MANAGEMENT. Regulations on FCIP appointments require documentation of the hiring process. The local servicing HR office must maintain the recruitment, selection, and hiring records for

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

each FCIP appointment for a minimum of three years. Each FCIP hiring action should document the following items:

- SF-52 and SF-50
- Position descriptions
- Recruitment plan
- List of applicants for the position
- Referral list including adjudicated veterans' preference
- Selection criteria for the position
- Use of pay flexibilities

To track and monitor the hiring process and assure proper citations are used, servicing HR offices must utilize the SF-52 Tracker process as designated by the Human Capital Policy Division (HC-11) in the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy. Guidance on the usage and procedures may be obtained from the HC-11 staff. Due to compliance and accountability factors, the servicing HR office must be able to track an FCIP action. Therefore, it is critical that all servicing HR offices utilize the prescribed system to apply a uniform approach to the Department's requirement to track its FCIP process.

Additionally, an FCIP checklist is provided at the end of this reference under [Exhibit 1](#), but offices are not mandated to use these forms if one has already been established. The checklists serve as guidance only and do not preclude the requirements set forth under the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

FCIP PAY ADMINISITRATION AND BENEFITS

WORK SCHEDULES. Program participants may work full-time or part-time. Participants may work up to 80 hours a pay period. With supervisory approval, schedules for full-time employees may be flexible or compressed.

PAY. Participants in the FCIP must be paid according to the criteria set forth in the appropriate General Schedule, pay band, wage grade, or other pay plan for the job. Typically, a FCIP participant will be employed at Step 1 of the General Schedule grade level for which they qualify based on a combination of education attainment and relevant work experience. When setting pay based solely on education, [Appendix A](#) may be utilized as a reference to set pay via the General Schedule.

FCIP participants will be eligible for a GS-5, GS-7, or GS-9 position depending on a combination of their course credit completion (refer to Appendix A) and work experience. Managers and supervisors should work with their local servicing HR offices early in the recruitment process to assist them in making qualification determinations. HR personnel can refer to the following web site for additional assistance in determining qualifications: www.opm.gov/qualifications.

STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT/RECRUITMENT/RELOCATION INCENTIVES. FCIP participants may be eligible to receive student loan repayments, relocation, and/or recruitment incentives (i.e. advanced pay rate, recruitment bonus, student loan repayment, tuition remission) as authorized by Federal statute or regulation. Such incentives are to be used when, in the absence of them, it would be difficult to recruit for the position. The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer recommends the incentives be utilized judiciously in keeping with budgetary constraints, critical skill needs, and fairness. If management

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

wishes to offer an incentive, servicing HR offices must document the process and receive written justification from the manager as with any other incentive. Both management and HR staff must comply with DOE pay policies and procedures (DOE Order 322.1B). Some examples of acceptable justification rationales can be found in 5 CFR 531.212(c) and include, but are not limited to:

- Pay retention based on current or historical salary of the applicant
- Proven difficulty in hiring within a particular occupational series without the use of incentives
- Excessive recent turnover
- Exceptional educational or vocational achievement.

Depending on the nature of the incentive, the recipient must sign a continuing service agreement prior to the receipt of a relocation incentive, recruitment incentive, or student loan repayment. The justification must be sent to the local servicing HR office prior to the job offer to ensure that the final job offer letter has the best compensation offer included. However, if the selectee is a current federal employee, the job offer cannot include an offer to repay a student loan, but loan repayment can be offered after the employee has transferred to DOE. The servicing HR office will be responsible for ensuring the FCIP employee receives a copy of the offer of employment.

TUITION ASSISTANCE. In the event that a program office desires to offer tuition assistance to an FCIP participant for collegiate coursework, such support is permissible under 5 CFR 213.3202(b)(17). Additionally, the program office should follow the guidance set forth in DOE Order 360.1-1B, the Federal Employee Training Manual for documenting such training support. At a minimum, program offices should ensure that the coursework is directly related to the occupation as well as the overall mission and function of the office. Additionally, the program office should seek to structure a continuing service agreements in alignment with DOE Order 360.1-1B.

ADVANCED PAY RATE. DOE recognizes that not every developmental employee/intern is equal in competency, education, and/or professional experience. Prior to their initial appointment, FCIP appointees are eligible to receive a pay rate above the minimum for the grade level for which they qualify. This slight increase in pay rate must be a result of the appointee's superior qualifications or to meet a special need. In situations where an advance pay rate (also known as an advance in-hire rate) is requested, the following criteria should be considered and documented in the case file prior to setting pay higher than a step 1:

- Education and grade point average
- Directly related work experience
- Qualifications of the individual
- Labor market
- Scarcity of candidates
- Organizational need
- Fiscal accountability

Provisions set forth in 5 C.F.R. 531.212 for the use of this authority and DOE pay policies apply. HR offices are accountable for keeping proper documentation.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

ANNUAL AND SICK LEAVE. FCIP participants are eligible to accrue annual and sick leave in accordance with 5 CFR Part 630.

FEDERAL BENEFITS. Participants in the FCIP are eligible to receive health care benefits, basic life insurance benefits, retirement benefits, and participate in the Federal Government's Thrift Savings Plan. (5 CFR 213.3202(b)(16)(ii) and 5 CFR 890.102(c)(2))

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

TRAINING. The FCIP is a DOE administered professional development program. As such, the department has identified core competencies and training requirements. All of these requirements must be completed by the end of the 2-year appointment if the FCIP participant is to be eligible for non-competitive conversion to the competitive federal service. The objective of the FCIP corporate training and development requirements is to ensure that all FCIP participants receive an overview of DOE and how the Department accomplishes its missions, while at the same time ensuring training in competencies in areas important to the position and DOE overall.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP). Within 45 days of the initial appointment, the manager must determine the necessary general and job-specific training for the FCIP participant to complete as part of an annual Individual Development Plan (IDP). This plan is critical to the employee's personal and professional learning during his/her appointment. Although FCIP employees are responsible for taking the initiative in designing their own IDP, managers/supervisors must collaborate with the Intern and provide guidance and input to assure the Plan is strategically linked with the position and organizational goals. HR staff through ETS should provide information about the IDPs during the Orientation.

Any required training for the FCIP should be integrated with the IDP. The manager must submit the participant's IDP to the servicing HR office as a record of the required training necessary to support the FCIP employee's development pertaining to their future role in the agency upon conversion.

This in-depth training and development establishes a foundation of knowledge and experience for the participant. The program's flexible structure allows field, program, and staff offices to incorporate any supervisor-identified training standard or requirement as part of the participant's FCIP training regimen.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

IDP Preparation

| Step # | Description | Responsible Party | Support |
|---------------|---|-------------------|---------------------|
| Step 1 | Complete Performance Plan. Assess the knowledge, skills, and/or abilities (KSAs) needed to perform the tasks identified in the Performance Plan. | Supervisor | Employee |
| Step 2 | Perform a needs assessment that includes development of objectives and developmental activities. | Supervisor | Employee |
| Step 3 | If individual has been selected as a Technical Qualification Program candidate, add qualification requirements to the Individual Development Plan | Supervisor | Employee |
| Step 4 | Prepare an Individual Development Plan (IDP) by accessing the DOE Employee Self Service (ESS) web site | Employee | Training Consultant |
| Step 5 | Approve IDP. | Supervisor | |
| Step 6 | Review/update and recertify the IDP as needed to ensure that it reflects current training and developmental needs. | Supervisor | Employee |

FCIP TRAINING PHILOSOPHY. The DOE Federal Career Intern Program is based on a 2-year curriculum designed to provide participants with value-added training and developmental experiences. These experiences are intended to enhance leadership skills while giving interns a broad overview of DOE functions, missions and vision. As part of the IDP process, the training plan serves as the professional foundation for career progression and identifies core competencies necessary in building integrity and fostering a well-rounded federal employee.

The DOE FCIP training cycle is based on three primary training needs which are integrated with the core training:

- organizational
- occupational
- individual

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS



In order to ensure an intern has the skills and competencies needed to support the mission of the Agency and organization, the three types of training needs must be integrated as part of an effective IDP.

FCIP TRAINING REQUIREMENTS. The requirements listed under the *Training Requirements* table are institutional, regardless of occupational series. These requirements are fundamental in assuring the FCIP employee is exposed to various training elements and professional, hands-on experiences. If Offices wish to include additional basic program requirements, a request outlining the modifications must be submitted to the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13). Upon review, HC-13 will make a determination to assure the additional requirements do not deviate from the intent of the Program and assure basic statutory compliance. Once an approval is granted, the new requirement(s) must be applied universally to all the program offices and field sites.

Training Requirements

| FCIP employees appointed at the GS-5/7 levels | FCIP employees appointed at the GS-9 or above levels |
|---|---|
| Minimum of 1 Rotational Assignment for a total of at least 90 consecutive calendar days <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Must be outside of the immediate office and/or scope of the immediate and second-level supervisor | Minimum of 1 Rotational Assignment for a total of at least 90 consecutive calendar days <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Must be outside of the immediate office and/or scope of the immediate and second-level supervisor |

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>A minimum of 120 hours of formal training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 80 hours of formal classroom training related to the core competencies ➤ 40 hours of job-related training (i.e. workshop, web-based training, seminars, conferences, etc) <p>Course training may address more than one competency</p> | <p>A minimum of 160 hours of formal training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 80 hours of formal classroom training related to the core competencies ➤ 80 hours of job-related training (i.e. workshop, web-based training, seminars, conferences, etc) <p>Course training may address more than one competency</p> |
| <p>Individual Development Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established IDP within the first 45 calendar days of the employee's appointment date. | <p>Individual Development Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established IDP within the first 45 calendar days of the employee's appointment date. |

Note: All program requirements and core training must be completed before the end of the 2- year internship period in order to be eligible for non-competitive conversion.

The *Training Requirements* contain core competencies that address both individual and occupational training needs. First-line supervisors should focus heavily on the occupational and individual needs to assure the employee has the basic and necessary skills and competencies needed to perform in his/her position.

HC-13 acknowledges that each FCIP brings a unique caliber of competencies based on the employee's academic background and personal and professional experiences. This training format will provide program offices with the flexibility to modify training requirements based on the individual and occupational needs of the FCIP employee. Program and field offices may include recommended competencies as it pertains to the FCIP employee's position. Organizations may add additional core and/or recommended training as long as it is aligned with individual, organizational or occupational needs.

Organizations **may not eliminate** a core competency identified in the table. Any changes to the employee's training must be position or organizationally based. Any training plans based on additional core competencies must be consistent across the program office. For example, if an office adds additional core training for an FCIP Budget Analyst, the training courses must be applied consistently for all FCIP Budget Analysts at the specified grade level across that specific organization.

If an office wishes to include additional core and/or recommended competencies, a formal written request must be submitted within the first 30 calendar days of the employee's initial appointment date and approved by the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13). If a proposed amendment is not submitted within this time period, the training requirements cannot be amended. In addition, each FCIP must have an established IDP with proposed training courses aligned with the core competency within the first 45 calendar days of a new fiscal year.

The following is a listing of core competencies for GS-5 through GS-9. This model is designed around the basic fundamentals that an FCIP employee will need based on the entry grade-level of the employee's initial appointment. A variety of low-cost or no-cost courses are available through DOE

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

Corporate Human Resources Information System (CHRIS) and the Online Learning Center (OLC2) On-line Training Center to support training needs. Courses may also be obtained through outside vendors as needed. For information regarding DOE course type and availability, the employee or the supervisor should contact the ETS staff for additional information.

Sources:

- DOE Online Learning Center <https://olc2.energy.gov/plateau/user/login.jsp>
- DOE CHRIS Training Catalog (<http://mis.doe.gov/ess>)
- USDA Graduate School
- Project Management Institute (www.pmi.org)
- Colleges and Universities
- Other vendors

Core Competency

| Grade Level | Competency | Type of Training | Minimum Number of Courses |
|---|---|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| GS-5 <i>Based on initial appointment</i> | Team building | Basic | 1 |
| | Communication/Interpersonal Skills (oral and/or written)* | Basic OR Intermediate | 1 |
| | Leadership | Basic | 1 |
| | Customer Service | Basic | 1 |
| | Understand Business of DOE/Organization | Basic | 1 |
| | Technical** | Basic | 2 |

*Based on the employee's competency-level upon entry, managers/supervisors should assess the type and level of communication and interpersonal skills that may need enhancement

** Based on the occupational series and any occupational/job-related requirements. Managers/Supervisors are responsible for identifying any technical training related to the position.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

| Grade Level | Competency | Type of Training | Minimum Number of Courses |
|---|---|------------------|---------------------------|
| GS-7 <i>Based on initial appointment</i> | Team building | Basic | 1 |
| | Communication/Interpersonal Skills (oral and/or written)* | Basic OR | 1 |
| | | Intermediate | 1 |
| | Financial Management | Basic | 1 |
| | Leadership | Basic | 1 |
| | Project Management | Basic | 1 |
| | Customer Service | Basic | 1 |
| | Understand Business of DOE/Organization | Basic | 1 |
| | Technical** | Basic | 2 |
| | | Intermediate | 1 |

*Based on the employee's competency-level upon entry, managers/supervisors should assess the type and level of communication and interpersonal skills that may need enhancement

** Based on the occupational series and any occupational/job-related requirements. Managers/Supervisors are responsible for identifying any technical training related to the position.

| Grade Level | Competency | Type of Training | Minimum Number of Courses |
|---|---|------------------|---------------------------|
| GS-9 <i>Based on initial appointment</i> | Problem Solving | Intermediate | 1 |
| | Communication/Interpersonal Skills (oral and/or written)* | Intermediate | 1 |
| | Financial Management | Basic | 1 |
| | Project Management | Basic | 1 |
| | Strategic Thinking | Basic | 1 |
| | Partnership Building | Intermediate | 1 |
| | Flexibility (i.e., Change Management) | Basic | 1 |
| | Conflict Management | Basic | 1 |
| | Understand Business of DOE/Organization | Basic | 1 |
| | Technical** | Basic | 1 |
| | | Intermediate | 2 |
| | | Advance | 1 |

*Based on the employee's competency-level upon entry, managers/supervisors should assess the type and level of communication and interpersonal skills that may need enhancement

** Based on the occupational series and any occupational/job-related requirements. Managers/Supervisors are responsible for identifying any technical training related to the position.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

CAREER DEVELOPMENT STATUS REPORTS. Reports are necessary to monitor the progress of the participants during their time in the Program. Normally, a quarterly report is a good tool to create a continuous feedback system to ensure participants are being developed effectively and efficiently while seeking to identify and resolve any potential problems. The reports will be utilized by the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer to improve the Program.

Participants, mentors, and supervisors should complete the required forms and submit a copy to the Site's Corporate Intern Coordinator (HR office) on a quarterly basis. The Coordinator must review the forms to ensure they have been completed accurately and identify any possible areas of concern. These reports serve as a baseline in assessing the Intern's professional development.

Reports must be maintained and filed with the HR office for the duration of the FCIP employee's 2-year appointment. The Office of Strategic Planning and Policy serving in an oversight capacity may request an annual report to assess the training and professional progression of FCIP employees and ensure statutory compliance with Federal guidelines and DOE FCIP procedures.

MENTORING. Professional mentoring relationships are important to the success of FCIP. Each FCIP employee should have at least one management level mentor, in addition to other mentors, both formal and informal. Supervisors, Sponsor(s), and the Career Intern Coordinator along with Enterprise Training Services (ETS) should work collaboratively to facilitate these relationships. Employees have the responsibility to initiate these types of relationship.

Once identified, each mentor of record will need to fill out quarterly forms to demonstrate regular mentor and protégé interaction. The form can be found in [Appendix G](#). For information regarding mentoring and DOE-sponsored programs, managers and servicing HR office may contact the department's Enterprise Training Services (ETS).

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

PERFORMANCE PLANS. Managers must develop performance standards for each FCIP participant. Managers must apply the same standards under the current DOE Performance Management System for Non-Supervisory Employees since the participant is a DOE federal employee. Performance standards will often vary depending on the work required of the participant for both their assigned position as well as any rotational assignment. All performance standards must be completed and submitted to the local servicing HR office within the first 90 days following the appointment.

Performance plans and appraisals shall not deviate from the Department's established performance management standards and forms currently set forward in the DOE Performance Management Policy. Organizations **should not** design a performance sub-system specifically for an FCIP intern. Like any other DOE performance plan, it must contain critical elements pertaining to the position and directly align to the organization's strategic goals and mission. Performance objectives for FCIP participants should remain consistent with the IDP and any other on-the-job training experiences planned for the fiscal year. When communicating performance expectations to FCIP participants, supervisors will fully

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

explain the relationship between an intern's performance objectives and training requirements, achieving organizational goals and objectives, and ultimately achieving the mission.

To assist managers in tracking an intern's performance between the mid-term and end-of-year review, the Employment Solutions Division has developed quarterly performance evaluation forms. These forms help to ensure that managers and supervisors provide consistent and more frequent opportunities for feedback as they develop their interns. These quarterly review forms can be found in [Appendix E](#) in the back of this reference book. These forms are to be completed in addition to the regular performance appraisal forms and submitted to the local servicing HR office upon non-competitive conversion at the end of the two years.

During the progress reviews, if an intern is falling short of "Meets Expectations" in any performance element, the manager should address the issue informally with their employee. If an intern receives a performance rating for the lowest level in any performance element, the intern must receive a rating of Fails to Meet Expectations. As a result, the intern will not be eligible to receive a promotion or performance award. If the employee is in a probationary period, consideration must be given to terminating the employee. If an employee has Federal status and is not in a probationary period, consideration must be given to removing the employee from the internship program. Managers must consult with their servicing HR office to determine the most suitable course of action.

WITHIN-GRADE INCREASES. FCIP participants are eligible to receive within-grade increases in accordance with federal regulations.

PROMOTIONS. FCIP participants are eligible for promotions. Time-in-grade restrictions do not apply, but participants must meet the qualifications through a combination of education, experience, and training as outlined in the IDP for the next grade level. FCIP participants are typically hired to positions that have promotion potential up to the GS-13 or equivalent. However, FCIP participants cannot be promoted to a level above the GS-12 while serving on an FCIP appointment.

An FCIP participant must serve no less than the equivalent of six months on an FCIP appointment to become eligible for a review of their performance that can lead to a promotion. The program office is not required to execute accelerated promotions, nor is there an entitlement that an FCIP participant will receive a promotion at any point during the 2-year program. Promotions are based on a combination of performance and core training completion.

A manager must justify the rationale for promotion and submit a package to the local HR servicing office prior to the requested effective date. An FCIP participant cannot receive more than two (2) promotions in a 52-week period (see 5 CFR 300.603(b)(6)) unless the organization has developed a training program approved by OPM that allows the organization to exceed two promotions in a 52 week period. All such training programs must be submitted to the Employment Solutions Division who, upon internal approval, will submit it to OPM for endorsement.

JUSTIFYING ACCELERATED PROMOTIONS. An FCIP employee is eligible to receive a one-time accelerated promotion from the date of the initial appointment. The decision will be at the discretion of the supervisor provided that the intern has successfully met the program requirements as outlined in the

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

IDP and any qualification determinations. To justify an accelerated promotion in FCIP it may require one or more of the following documents:

- Updated transcript showcasing additional educational attainment (required).
- An approved IDP with completed required training justifying the promotion to the higher grade (required if not utilizing educational attainment).
- Performance appraisal (required if not utilizing educational attainment).
- Written justification based on identified critical performance elements (required if not utilizing educational attainment). (See the Promotion Justification Sample Document in [Appendix C](#))

As part of the standard operating procedures, servicing HR offices must include processes and procedures as to how accelerated promotions will be managed.

AWARDS. FCIP participants are eligible to receive monetary or non-monetary awards based on a suggestion, invention, superior accomplishment, productivity gain, or other personal effort that contributes to the efficiency, economy, or other improvement of Government operations. FCIP employees are also eligible to receive performance-based awards or bonuses assuming they meet the criteria set forth in DOE Order 331.1-B.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

MOVEMENT BETWEEN POSITIONS. According to 5 CFR 213.3202 (o)(8), FCIP participants may move from one position to another. Any movement of an individual from one position to another does not signify the start of a new 2-year developmental assignment. The individual will continue to serve the remainder of their initial 2-year appointment in the new position. In order to move to a new position, the individual must meet the basic qualifications for the position. Additionally, the FCIP participant cannot be moved to a position with promotion potential greater than the current full performance level without competition.

NON-COMPETITIVE CONVERSION. FCIP participants are eligible for non-competitive conversion to career-conditional or career status in the federal competitive service. FCIP participants must complete **all** required training curriculum and rotational assignments to be considered for non-competitive conversion. The intent of this appointment is to foster career progression from the entry to mid-level through the journeyman level. Any FCIP appointment should be based on an FTE to which the program office can effectively convert the participant to the competitive service.

FCIP participants are not required to serve a probationary period following their conversion to the competitive service. The 2-year intern period under which the employee is appointed serves as the probationary (trial) period. Additionally, the time served in this appointment does count toward gaining career status (see 5 CFR 213.3202 (o)(6)(iii)). Any time spent under this or other federal appointment must be considered in determining whether to convert the participant to career or career-conditional status.

DOE recognizes that budgetary issues may arise which could negatively impact permanent placement. If any FCIP intern will be displaced, the servicing HR office must notify the Office of Strategic Planning

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

and Policy. When a manager or supervisor is unable to permanently place the intern in their organization, the following actions must be taken:

- Management must contact the servicing HR office at least 90-days prior to the conversion date. HR offices must attempt to permanently place the intern in any other servicing organization.
- If placement attempts fail and a conversion appointment is not processed, the employment is terminated unless eligible for placement as outlined below:
 - The employee previously held a career or career-conditional appointment at DOE prior to entering the Program and failed to complete the FCIP requirements for reasons other than misconduct or suitability.
 - The servicing HR office must place the employee in a career or career-conditional position of equivalent status at the same program or field office, regardless of the organization. The position should be located in the same geographic location and at the same grade or pay in comparison to the position from which the intern was converted.
 - If placement is not possible, the servicing HR office must contact the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13) at least 60 days prior to the termination date and advise the HC-13 of the situation and provide documentation of placement efforts.
 - The Employment Solutions Division (HC-13) will coordinate with other DOE HR offices to attempt to accommodate the placement of the employee. HC-13 will notify the employee in writing of the outcome.
 - If the employee is from another agency, DOE is not obligated to provide the accommodation and placement as previously described.

NON-COMPETITIVE CONVERSION DOCUMENTATION. The following documentation is required to be submitted to the local servicing HR office prior to conversion:

- SF-52 Conversion Action
- Most recent Performance Appraisal
- IDP with documented completion dates for required training and rotational assignments
- Rotational Assignment forms
- Letter from the rotational assignment supervisor detailing the participant's performance
- All quarterly reports for the two year period (total of 8 reports).

EXTENSION OF AN FCIP APPOINTMENT. The initial appointment for FCIP is set for two years. DOE acknowledges that sometimes circumstances arise that impact the 2-year period requirement. As a result, a request to extend the appointment of an FCIP participant must be submitted to the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13). There are two types of extensions that may be filed:

1. The department can authorize an extension of a FCIP appointment up to an additional 120 days. Justifications must be submitted to the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13) and contain at a minimum:

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

- Reason for extension
 - Proposed timeline to complete of training requirements justified with training dates
 - If it is personal reason, the intent of the intern and proposed return to duty date.
2. Extension(s) in excess of 121 days or more must be approved by OPM. Justifications must first be submitted to the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13) for review and subsequently forwarded to OPM for consideration. For additional guidance, the servicing HR office should contact HC-13.

BREAKS IN THE PROGRAM. If there is a period where the FCIP participant is unable to work due to circumstances beyond their control (i.e. unforeseen health issues, family emergency, etc), a break in the program may be approved in advance by the local servicing HR office. The period of the break in program may not exceed three months in duration. The supervisor of the FCIP participant must submit a written justification to the servicing HR office when requesting a break in program for the FCIP participant. At this point, the individual will be placed on Leave without Pay (LWOP) for the period of the break in the program. As with any LWOP personnel action, HR offices must follow the guidance outlined in the *Guide to Processing Personnel Actions* when determining if and when an SF-50 is required. The local servicing HR office must notify the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13) of the break in program. Any break over three months (accumulative) in the program cannot be approved by the local servicing HR office. Servicing HR offices must submit a written justification for extension(s) beyond the three months to HC-13 no later than 30 calendar days prior to the NTE date/proposed return date.

The rationale for extensions beyond four months may include:

- Extreme health issue/treatment
- Extended military deployment or commitment
- Unique educational opportunity not to exceed six months in length
- Compelling departmental interest due to unique skills required in an identified mission-critical occupational series.

If an extension beyond the three months is not granted, the FCIP participant must immediately be removed from service.

SEPARATION OR TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT. The servicing HR office must be informed of any proposed action to separate an FCIP participant on account of performance, conduct, or failure to complete program training objectives. An appointment may be terminated at any time for any of the following reasons:

1. Resignation
2. Suspension, expulsion, or withdrawal from his or her educational institution
3. Unsatisfactory work performance or conduct (must be properly documented)
4. Failure to maintain academic standards
5. Failure to complete program training requirements
6. Inability of the program office to retain the student in the position; e.g., budget constraints, reduction-in-force, etc.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

For additional information regarding disciplinary and/or separation action, managers should consult with their servicing HR office.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD. If an FCIP participant is non-competitively converted after the two year program, the time spent by participants in the FCIP can be credited toward the mandatory one year probationary period, regardless of work schedule, so long as the participant is in a pay status. (see 5 CFR 315.802). For the purpose of this program, the two year program essentially serves as the probationary period for the FCIP participant.

REDUCTION IN FORCE (RIF). Participants are placed in the excepted service in Tenure Group 2. The employee does not have vested rights to be non-competitively converted to a competitive service position.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Servicing Human Resources Offices

- Initiate, develop and maintain contacts with colleges, universities, minority/non-minority professional organizations, etc. in collaboration with the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13).
- Participate in career/job fairs with the objective of building and maintaining long-term relationships and identify potential FCIP candidates.
- Conduct primary recruiting and hiring for respective sites/organizations.
- Process personnel actions pertaining to the FCIP and assure compliance with regulatory statutes and DOE policies.
- Consult with managers/supervisors on most effective recruitment strategy.
- Utilize the SF-52 Tracker to assess and track the phases of the FCIP hiring process.
- Advise managers/supervisors on statutory and program requirements.
- Measure the success of the FCIP.
- Identify a Corporate Intern Coordinator (CIC).

Corporate Intern Coordinator

- Assist the FCIP Interns with personal and professional development, including on-site programmatic and personnel issues.
- Coordinate and finalize rotational assignments.
- Coordinate all FCIP activities between servicing HR offices and the program or field office where the CIC is employed with the Employment Solutions Division.
- Maintain records and status information regarding training and development.
- Conduct internal reviews to assure statutory requirements are met.
- Manage data call/reporting submissions to DOE.

Office of Learning and Workforce Development (HC-20)

- Oversee the training and developmental requirements of the Federal Career Intern Program participants.
- Collaborate with the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13) on training requirements.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

- Ensure the availability of training courses/activities as it pertains to the core curriculum.
- Provide direction and guidance on training and development implementation to HR offices and FCIP interns.
- Ensure centralized training activities with field and headquarters offices.
- Assist HC-13, CIC, FCIP intern, managers, and program and field offices in the coordination of rotational assignments among headquarters, field offices, laboratories, and/or contractor organizations.
- Manage and ensure IDPs are completed and that outlined training activities support the goals as described in the Plan.

Office of Strategic Planning and Policy, Employment Solutions Division (HC-13)

- Conduct oversight activities of the FCIP to ensure regulatory and Agency compliance.
- Develop and share contacts with colleges, universities, minority/non-minority professional organizations, and other recruitment sources.
- Develop corporate marketing and branding strategies and materials.
- Develop corporate guidance, procedures and policy in the execution of the intern program.
- Design core training curriculum.
- Design metrics to assess effectiveness and efficiency as it relates to career fairs.

Program Offices, Field Offices, and Support Offices

- Provide visible and continuing personal engagement, commitment, and support of the program.
- Provide necessary support to servicing HR offices to assure the hiring of quality candidates. This is true not only of recruitment, but also training and development.
- Integrate the use of intern programs, especially the FCIP, as part of workforce planning to address critical needs and succession planning.
- Hold leaders/managers and supervisors accountable for the development and mentoring of FCIP participants.
- Accountable for human capital decision-making.
- Designate a sponsor for the FCIP employee who will develop and oversee the coordination and training.
- Support corporate marketing and branding efforts designed by HC-13 that will promote and enhance intern programs.

FCIP Intern

- Commit to the completion of the program and to the servicing organization.
- Work cooperatively with their managers to develop an Individual Development Plan that charts the course of their professional and personal development for the next two years.
- Participate in all Program-sponsored activities, including regularly-scheduled meetings and training activities.
- Contribute and share ideas and best practices for developmental activities and professional development with the group, such as; books, articles, speakers, meetings, training, detail opportunities, and web sites.
- Complete travel related paperwork, as well as program-requested training and rotational information in a timely fashion.
- Be proactive and engaged in seeking developmental, educational, and training opportunities.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

- Assume responsibility for keeping abreast of program-related information and sharing the information with managers and other stakeholders, when necessary.
- Be open and above-board with managers and program staff regarding information and challenges related to professional or personal issues affecting Program participation.
- Work with the CIC and Sponsor in to facilitate solutions to any problems that may arise.
- Provide information relating to record keeping during the FCIP cycle.
 - For example, at orientation the intern may be asked for an IDP update and contact information including home base location and name of the supervisor.
 - At mid-cycle, the intern will be asked for updates on rotations and trainings to date. At program completion, the intern may be asked to provide final rotation and end of program placement information.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

THE PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT FELLOWS (PMF) PROGRAM

Program Background: The PMF program is a 2-year leadership, career development, and training program that attracts outstanding individuals at the graduate degree level who have an interest in and commitment to a career in public service. PMF candidates are Master's degree candidates who are nominated by their colleges or universities to apply for the prestigious program. Finalists must complete a rigorous and competitive process administered by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) which will subsequently approve a list of PMF finalists for immediate eligibility to be hired into the Federal workforce. Federal agencies only have access to the pool of finalists announced by OPM. Access to the full list of applicants is prohibited.

Since the program is administered by OPM, a fee is assessed upon the hiring office for each PMF hired. The fee reimburses OPM for the recruitment, candidate assessment services, career fair, and 3-day PMF orientation curriculum during the fall of the appointment year. The recruitment and assessment process spans from September through the end of February.

OPM selects the finalists from mid-March to early April, at which time, DOE may make an offer. Managers can learn more about this program by contacting their servicing HR office or by referencing the OPM web site at <http://www.pmf.opm.gov>.

PMF PROGRAM OVERVIEW

| |
|---|
| Must have completed a graduate degree from an accredited school. |
| Hiring a PMF requires the usage of an FTE for an appointment to be made. |
| A federal hiring fair is held in March/April of the hiring year in Washington, DC. Agencies can attend for free and set up interviews with the finalists. |
| PMFs are hired on a 2-year excepted service appointment and are eligible for non-competitive conversion to career-conditional status following the completion of program requirements. |
| Initial hires can be made at the GS-9 to the GS-12 level. PMFs are not held to time-in-grade restrictions and are eligible to receive consideration for an accelerated promotion once every six months. However, PMFs may not be promoted to higher than the GS-13 during the two year program. |
| PMF's can be hired in positions with a full performance level up to the GS-15. Any position targeted for the GS-15 must be justified and approved by the servicing HR office. |

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

Participants are placed on a 2-year developmental training program and must receive 80 hours of formal training each calendar year. Additionally, all participants must participate in at least one 4-6 month developmental assignment at an internal DOE organization or an external organization.

Prior to non-competitive conversion, PMF Finalists must be certified as having completed all program requirements by the DOE Executive Resource Board. A certification package must be submitted to the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer prior to scheduling an ERB certification and conversion.

Items required to hire a PMF

- SF-52 indicating action to hire a Presidential Management Fellow
- Résumé
- Position Descriptions for all positions up to the full performance level
- All required justifications for recruitment bonus, advance in hire, and student loan repayment prior to extending formal job offer
- 2 year training and development plan, submitted within 30 days of appointment
- Hiring office must submit Form 1616 and \$6,000 per intern cost to OPM within 30 days of appointment
- MOU/MOA developed for internal and external rotational assignments

PMF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

OPM screens each applicant for basic eligibility requirements. In addition, program offices should also consider the following additional criteria when appointing a PMF Finalist:

1. The Consolidated Appropriation Act, 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-117, div C, tit VII, §704, (December 16, 2009) has revised the legal requirements for hiring foreign nationals. The Department no longer has the authority to compensate a noncitizen, unless the noncitizen is lawfully admitted for permanent residence as outlined in 8 U.S.C. 1324b(a)(3)(B), and is seeking U.S. citizenship, or falls within one of a few extremely narrow exceptions based on the individuals profession. The “allied country” exception, which was widely used as the basis for compensating noncitizens, is no longer in effect.
2. The PMF finalist must complete all requirements for their Masters’ Degree by August 31 of the appointment year.
3. The participant must meet personnel suitability and physical requirements as required for the position to which they are applying.
4. The participant must meet the OPM Qualification Standard for the occupational series and grade of the position.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

5. Students may work with a relative when there is no direct reporting relationship and the relative is not in a position to influence or control the student's appointment, employment, promotion, or advancement (as per 5 CFR 213.3202 (a)(7)).

REQUIRED PMF APPOINTMENT DOCUMENTATION

PMF participants must submit the following documentation to be considered for an appointment:

Résumé

- Official documentation verifying completion of degree, diploma, or certificate program at an accredited school by August 31 of year they were selected as a PMF finalist. Documentation may include:
 - Official transcript
 - Letter from the Registrar's or Dean's office
 - Evidence of citizenship

PMF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION REQUIREMENTS

WORKFORCE PLANNING. Although the use of a PMF appointment is not a guaranteed permanent placement, managers should assess their FTE usage to determine if permanent placement is warranted and meets workforce needs. These assessments must be identified through workforce planning methodology and integrated in the organization's workforce/staffing plan(s). A PMF appointment shall not be used to fill short-term competency and skill gaps. Any targeting of specific individuals in an effort to circumvent fair and open competition is strictly prohibited. Managers must not target a specific individual for a PMF appointment without first conducting a fair and open competition in accordance with merit system principles.

RECRUITMENT AND STAFFING. PMF appointments at the GS-9, 11, or 12 levels can be used to recruit for any DOE position, provided that the hiring office has funding to remit payment to the Office of Personnel Management for each Fellow hired.

In light of merit system principles, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer requires that all PMF positions be advertised via OPM's PMF job database. Recruitment for PMF positions will be conducted primarily by the servicing HR office and subject matter experts from the hiring office. Requests for assistance when developing a recruitment and marketing strategy as well as utilizing corporate recruitment materials can be made to the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13).

The full performance level (FPL) of a PMF appointment cannot exceed the GS-15 or equivalent level. If the position has an FPL higher than the GS-14 level or equivalent, a justification must be submitted to the DOE headquarters Employment Solution Division (HC-13). All positions above the GS-14 submitted for review must be non-supervisory positions in nature for consideration. The following documentation must be submitted by the requesting office in an effort to justify an FPL above the GS-14 when using the PMF hiring authority:

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

- Position Description
- Description of the organization and its relation to the DOE strategic plan
- Copy of the organization's workforce plan
- Copy of the organization's succession plan with identification of competencies and skills needed in the office
- Proposed employee development (training) plan for the two year program
- Written Justification for the request (to include rationale for the need based on difficulty in finding mid level talent, unique skills possessed by the potential selectee, filling identified skills gaps, retirement/attrition concerns, etc.)

An FPL **cannot** be adjusted after the initial appointment is made. For example, if the appointment was at the GS-9 with a GS-12 FPL, the servicing HR office can not adjust the full performance level to a GS-13 or above after the appointment has been made. Increases beyond the original stated FPL requires competition and the establishment of a new position. As a result, managers and supervisors must submit all position descriptions and statements of difference prior to the interview and selection process.

- NOTE: HR offices must annotate the FPL on the initial appointment SF-50.

All personnel actions related to a PMF appointment should incorporate the mandatory statements and authorization codes as set forth in the OPM Guide to Processing Personnel Actions (<http://www.opm.gov/feddata/gppa/gppa.asp> in Chapter 11).

Appropriate appointment citations are as follows:

| PMF Appointment * | Nature of Action | NOAC | Authority Code | Authority | Tenure Group |
|--|------------------|------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Is employed as a Fellow under Sch A authority - and the person is not on your agency's rolls | Exc Appt | 170 | X9M | 213.3102(ii) | II |
| Is employed as a Fellow under Sch A authority - and the person is already on the rolls of your agency | Conv to Exc Appt | 570 | X9M | 213.3102(ii) | II |
| Is employed as a Fellow under authority of E.O. 13318, and cannot be appointed under Sch A authority - and the person is not on your agency's rolls | Exc Appt | 170 | X7M | E.O. 13318 | II |
| Is employed as a Fellow under authority of E.O. 13318, and cannot be appointed under Sch A authority - and the person is already on the rolls of your agency | Conv to Exc Appt | 570 | X7M | E.O. 13318 | II |

* Remarks to be shown on the SF-50 (Appointment Limitations):

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

- Remark Code A04 - Appointment is NTE 2 years. Upon satisfactory completion of the Program, you may be noncompetitively converted to a permanent appointment. If your performance is not satisfactory or if you fail to satisfactorily complete this program, employment will be terminated.
- If the employee is currently employed under a non-temporary appointment in the competitive service: Remark Code A24 - Employee informed in advance of the conditions of appointment under the Presidential Management Fellows Program.

NOTE: When a Fellow moves without a break in service from one agency to another during their 2-year appointment, the losing agency must process a “Termination-Appt In (agency)” (NOAC of 352) personnel action and the gaining agency processes a NOAC of 170 or 570 under 213.3102(ii) or E.O. 13318, as applicable. Transfer of Fellows between the Agencies must be coordinated by the PMF Coordinators. The Coordinators must notify the OPM’s PMF Program Office once the reappointment decision is final. The servicing HR office must notify HC-13 of this decision so that the Department’s program records can be updated.

HIRING AND APPLICATION PROCESS. Although public notice is a statutory requirement under 5 U.S.C. 3327 and 3330 when filling positions through the competitive examining process, a public notice is not needed when filling vacancies using the PMF authority; however, merit principles still apply. Servicing HR offices have several options to assure compliance:

- The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer requires that a PMF position be advertised for no less than 3 days on OPM’s PMF job board web site.
- Upon submission of the PMF Job Announcement Form (see Appendix L), program offices will receive access to the PMF Finalist database. In an effort to ensure an effective process that upholds merit principles, access to the database will be limited to: one selecting official, two subject matter experts, and one HR liaison for the announced position. If a single office has more than one position to advertise, they will not receive additional access beyond what is stated in this section.
- The servicing HR office shall work with the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13) in the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy to obtain access to the PMF résumé database.
- The servicing HR office shall work in tandem with the DOE PMF Coordinator (HC-13) and the hiring manager to ensure that a standard set of interview questions has been determined and that a set of rating criterion is applied and documented. The servicing HR office must document both the recruitment strategy and the rating and ranking strategy (making sure to account for veterans’ preference).
- Appointments are not subject to Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP) requirements.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

- Administrative Careers with America (ACWA) requirements do not apply to PMF appointments due to the fact that all appointments are made from the GS-9 through the GS-12 levels or their equivalent.

RATING AND RANKING. The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer recommends that each servicing HR office work with hiring officials in the development of a rating and ranking procedure that explains and defends hiring decisions under these programs.

HR offices may utilize either a numerical ranking or category ranking system to evaluate candidates. The system of choice must be noted in the servicing office's internal standard operating procedures for PMF hiring. The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer recommends utilizing category ranking in the selection process for PMFs. Human Resources offices are responsible for documenting the ranking results in the case file and must ensure procedures are consistent when making a PMF appointment. Applicants may be rated and ranked according to one or more of the following qualitative factors such as: Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities; Competency assessment; behavioral interviews; or a combination of assessment tools. Procedures must be documented and applied consistently to avoid impropriety.

VETERANS' PREFERENCE. During the rating and finalist notification process, OPM is responsible for adjudicating veterans' preference. Upon the announcement of the PMF finalists, HR offices must ensure that interviews and selections adhere to veterans' preference order. Depending on the veterans' preference category on the referral list, the same process and procedures that are used in the competitive service apply when deciding who to interview and select.

The decision under *Gingery v. Department of Defense*, 550 F.3d. 1347 (Fed.Cir. 2008) issued by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit invalidated an OPM regulation dealing with veterans' preference, since the regulation provided less protection than what was provided for in Federal statute. . Since the PMF is an excepted service appointment, the Court ruled that selection into the excepted service must be conducted in the same manner and under the same conditions as required for the competitive service. As a result, 5 CFR 302.401(b) under the excepted service was ruled invalid. HR staffs should refer to OPM's Vet Guide for additional information: (<http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp#2Ajudicat>).

Therefore, to adjudicate veteran's preference under a PMF appointment, the HR office must apply the same procedures as used under the competitive process when assessing veterans' preference. Staff should refer to the Vet Guide for additional information; (<http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp#2Ajudicat>).

It is important to note that for 30% or more compensable veterans, the servicing HR office must obtain permission for pass-over from OPM while simultaneously notifying the Office of the Strategic Planning and Policy, Human Capital Policy Division (HC-11) of this course of action. While requesting OPM's approval, the servicing HR office must notify the preference eligible of the proposed pass-over and the reasons thereof, and his/her right to respond.

- This notification must be timely sent to the preference eligible's last known address.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

Managers should consult with their servicing HR office for questions regarding the adjudication process.

VETERAN PASS OVER. If a Finalist is preference eligible and the individual expresses an interest in working for an agency, the application must be considered. For purposes of this reference book, “expresses an interest” means that the applicants has initiated contact with the agency in person or by other direct communication (i.e. telephone, email, formal letter) and asked for consideration. The types of contact can include: dropping off a résumé at a job fair, sending a résumé by mail/email, or delivering a résumé in person to a manager, supervisor, or HR office that is considering an appointment.

If the selecting official decides not to hire the preference eligible or the preference eligible who expressed interest in a particular position, then a written justification must be submitted to the servicing HR office as to why the preference eligible did not meet the criteria for the position. The type of veteran will determine the course of action in terms of notification. Staff should refer to OPM’s Vet Guide for additional information; (<http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp#2Ajudicat>).

In general, a written justification accomplishes two objectives. A preference eligible is entitled, upon request, to obtain a copy of the reasons he or she was passed over in favor of a non-preference eligible. Secondly, if Office of Personnel Management (OPM) officials audit agency PMF hiring processes, the written justification serves as documentation that preference eligibles who were part of the agency applicant pool received proper consideration.

CASE FILE MANAGEMENT. Regulations on PMF appointments require documentation of the hiring process. The servicing HR Office must maintain the recruitment, selection, and hiring records for each PMF appointment for a minimum of three years. Each PMF hiring action should document the following items:

- SF-52 and SF-50
- Position Descriptions
- Recruitment Plan
- List of Interview Questions
- Rating and Ranking Criteria for interviews
- List of applicants for the position
- Referral list including adjudicated veterans’ preference
- Selection criteria for the position

To track and monitor the hiring process and assure proper citations are used, servicing HR Offices must utilize the SF-52 Tracker process as designated by the Human Capital Policy Division (HC-11) in the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy. Guidance on the usage and procedures may be obtained from HC-11 staff directly. Due to compliance and accountability factors, the servicing HR office must be able to track a PMF action. Therefore it is critical that all servicing HR offices utilize the prescribed system to apply a uniform approach to the department’s requirement to track its PMF process.

Managers and staff **are not** authorized to extend an informal or formal offer of employment to a PMF. Servicing HR offices with delegated HR authority are authorized to make PMF job offers and appointments. Basic HR functions such as job classification, compliance with veterans’ preference,

managing the referral process, and tentative and formal job offers are functions that must be performed by HR. These functions cannot be re-delegated to management for PMF intended purposes.

All personnel actions for the PMF should incorporate the mandatory statements and authorization codes as set forth in the OPM Guide to Processing Personnel Actions. For a copy of this document visit the following website: <http://www.opm.gov/feddata/gppa/gppa.asp> and review Chapter 11. Additionally, a PMF checklist is provided at the end of this reference book under [Exhibit 2](#), but offices are not mandated to use these forms if one has already been established.

PMF PAY ADMINISTRATION AND BENEFITS

WORK SCHEDULES. Program participants may work full-time or part-time. PMF participants must work a minimum of 16 hours per work week to be considered part-time. With supervisory approval, schedules for full-time employees may be flexible or compressed.

PAY. PMF participants must be paid according to the criteria set forth in the appropriate General Schedule, pay band, wage grade, or other pay plan for the job. Typically, a PMF participant will be employed at Step 1 of the General Schedule grade level for which they qualify based on a combination of education attainment and relevant work experience. When setting pay based solely on education, Appendix A can be utilized as a reference to set pay via the General Schedule (view Appendix A).

HR offices may appoint a PMF at the GS-9, GS-11, or GS-12 level depending on their level of education and ability to satisfy the qualifications for the position. All PMF participants are Masters' degree recipients at minimum. All PMFs will be automatically qualified at the GS-9, step 1 level by OPM. However, a combination of education and experience can be utilized to justify an appointment at the GS-11 or GS-12 level (refer to Appendix A) and work experience. Managers and supervisors should work with their HR office early in the recruitment process to assist in making qualification determinations. HR specialists can refer to the following web site for additional assistance in determining qualifications: www.opm.gov/qualifications.

STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT/RECRUITMENT/RELOCATION INCENTIVES. The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer recommends that recruitment incentives be utilized judiciously in keeping with budgetary constraints, critical skill needs, and fairness. PMF participants may be eligible to receive student loan repayments and/or relocation or recruitment incentives. Such incentives are to be used when, in the absence of them, it would be difficult to recruit for the position. If management wishes to offer an incentive, servicing HR offices must document the process and receive written justification from the manager as with any other incentive. If a recruitment incentive is to be utilized, a written justification must be submitted to the servicing HR office. Some examples of acceptable justification rationales can be found in 5 CFR 531.212(c) and include, but are not limited to:

- Pay retention based on current or historical salary of the applicant
- Proven difficulty in hiring within a particular occupational series without the use of incentives
- Excessive recent turnover

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

- Exceptional educational or vocational achievement.

All justifications for student loan repayment and recruitment incentive should follow the guidance set forth in 5 CFR 231.212 and DOE Order 322.1B. A signed continuing service agreement by the recipient prior to the receipt of either a recruitment bonus or student loan repayment must be included. The justification must be sent to the servicing HR office prior to the job offer to ensure that the final job offer letter has the best compensation offer included. However, if the selectee is a current federal employee, the job offer cannot include an offer to repay a student loan, but loan repayment can be offered after the employee has transferred to DOE. The local HR office will be responsible for ensuring the PMF hire is sent and receives a copy of their offer of employment.

TUITION ASSISTANCE. In the event that a program office desires to offer tuition assistance to a PMF participant for collegiate coursework, such support is permissible and should follow the guidance set forth in DOE Order 360.1-1B, the Federal Employee Training Manual for documenting such training support. At a minimum, Program offices should ensure that the coursework is directly related to the occupation as well as the overall mission and function of the office. Additionally, the Program office should seek to structure a continuing service agreements in alignment with DOE Order 360.1-1B.

ADVANCED PAY RATES. DOE recognizes that not every developmental employee/intern is equal in competency, education, and/or professional experience. Prior to their initial appointment, PMF appointees are eligible to receive an advanced pay rate, or advance-in-hire, to a higher step level within the grade level for which they qualify as a result of the appointee's superior qualifications or to meet a special need. In situations where an advance-in-hire rate is requested, the following criteria should be considered and documented in the case file prior to setting pay higher than a step 1 or equivalent:

- Education and grade point average
- Directly related work experience
- Qualifications of the individual
- Labor market
- Scarcity of candidates
- Organizational need
- Fiscal accountability

Provisions set forth in 5 C.F.R. 531.212 for the use of this authority must comply with DOE pay policies. HR offices are accountable for keeping proper documentation.

ANNUAL AND SICK LEAVE. Despite being in the excepted service, PMF participants are eligible to accrue annual and sick leave in accordance with 5 CFR Part 630.

FEDERAL BENEFITS. Participants in the PMF are eligible to receive health care benefits, basic life insurance benefits, retirement benefits, and participate in the Federal Government's Thrift Savings Plan. Given that PMF participants are expected to complete a 2 year appointment, PMF participants are eligible to receive full health care benefits (see 5 CFR 213.3202(b)(16)(ii) and 5 CFR 890.102(c)(2)),

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

life insurance, and retirement benefits. If a PMF participant elects to receive health benefits, the employee must pay 100 percent of the employee portion. A typical PMF participant is expected to work full time and therefore is eligible to receive the full government contribution under their chosen health plan. A PMF participant is enrolled into the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS).

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS. The PMF is an OPM-administered professional development program. As such, OPM has identified basic training and development requirements for all PMF participants. All of these requirements must be completed by the end of the 2-year appointment if the PMF participant is to be eligible for non-competitive conversion to the competitive federal service. The objective of the PMF training and development requirements is to ensure that all PMF participants receive substantive work assignments and that those assignments place each individual on the fast track to becoming future leaders, managers, and supervisors at DOE.

OPM requires that each PMF complete the following training and development criteria:

- Receive 80 hours of formal classroom training each year of the appointment for a total of 160 hours of formal classroom training over two years.
- Complete a 4-6 month developmental assignment (must be consistent with IDP and based on required competencies for the target position).

In an effort to ensure that PMF participants are properly developed as potential senior leaders for the department, the following training outline must be followed. **PMF candidates will not be eligible to receive consideration for conversion unless an IDP that addresses the following training requirements and competencies are met.**

| PMF Training and Development Requirements |
|---|
| Minimum of 1 Developmental Rotational Assignment for 4-6 months (120-180 consecutive calendar days) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assignment must be outside of the immediate office and/or scope of the immediate and second-level supervisor (see OPM's PMF Guide for Agencies, page 37).• PMF must have worked a minimum of six months in their home office prior to considering a developmental assignment |
| A minimum of 80 hours of formal classroom training each year for a total of 160 hours in 2 years <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 80 hours must be accomplished each year. The total 160 hours of training is not cumulative (see 5 CFR 362.204(b)(2)(i)).• 24 hours of training in the first year must be spent attending the OPM developed, PMF Orientation in Shepherdstown, West Virginia.• Classroom training should address job-specific competencies (identified by the manager) and Executive Core Qualifications (designed by OPM and recommended by HC-13) |

PMF participants must also attend formal training to address key leadership competencies listed in the chart that follows. One class may be used to address more than one of the competencies below so long as the course curriculum mirrors the definition of the competency. For assistance with competency

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

definitions and course determinations, contact the Enterprise Training Services (ETS) in DOE headquarters.

| Competency | Minimum Number of Courses | Training Level |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Team building | 1 | Intermediate to Advanced |
| Communication/Interpersonal Skills (oral and/or written) | 1 | Intermediate to Advanced |
| Strategic Thinking | 1 | Intermediate to Advanced |
| Customer Service | 1 | Intermediate to Advanced |
| Ethics/Integrity* | 1 | Basic |
| Change Management/Flexibility | 1 | Basic |
| Influencing/Negotiation | 1 | Intermediate to Advanced |
| Financial Management | 1 | Basic |
| Project Management Fundamentals | 1 | Basic |
| Competency | Minimum Number of Courses | Training Level |
| Conflict Management/Resolution | 1 | Intermediate to Advanced |
| Diversity* | 1 | Basic |
| Technical** | 3 | Intermediate to Advanced |

* These competencies can be met by ensuring the completion of mandatory annual ethics and the annual EEO/Civil Rights/ Diversity training.

** Based on the occupational series and any occupational/job-related requirements. Managers/Supervisors are responsible for identifying any technical training related to the position and necessary for development in the occupation.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP). Within 45 days of the initial appointment, the manager must determine the necessary general and job-specific training for the PMF participant to complete as part of an annual Individual Development Plan (IDP). The manager should collaborate with the PMF participant in the development of the IDP. The manager must ensure that the IDP reflects the development requirements and competencies set forth in this desktop reference. The manager must also submit the PMF participant's IDP to the local HR servicing office as a record of the required training necessary to support the PMF's development pertaining to their future role in the agency upon conversion. A sample of an IDP to submit can be found in [Appendix D](#).

This in-depth training and development establishes a foundation of knowledge and experience for the participant. The program's flexible structure allows field, program, and support offices to incorporate any supervisor-identified training standards or requirements as part of the participant's PMF training regimen.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

A variety of low-cost or no-cost courses are available through DOE Corporate Human Resources Information System (CHRIS) and the Online Learning Center (OLC2) On-line Training Center to support training needs. Courses may also be obtained through outside vendors as needed. For information regarding DOE course type and availability, the employee or the supervisor should contact the ETS staff for additional information.

Sources:

- DOE Online Learning Center (<https://olc2.energy.gov/plateau/user/login.jsp>)
- DOE CHRIS Training Catalog (<http://mis.doe.gov/ess>)
- USDA Graduate School
- Project Management Institute (www.pmi.org)
- Colleges and Universities
- Other vendors

DEVELOPMENTAL ASSIGNMENTS. Hiring organizations are to provide each PMF Fellow with at least one full-time developmental assignment of at least 4 to 6 months during the fellowship. This assignment must be in a functional area related to the Fellow's target position and consistent with the employee's IDP (5 CFR 362.204(b)(4)).

In accordance with OPM guidance, developmental assignments must be outside of their home office. Developmental assignments can range from specific assignments at a Fellow's home agency, to an extended assignment in another agency or even outside the Federal Government. To be considered "developmental," the assignment must include management and/or technical responsibilities that allow the Fellow to learn and to demonstrate skills and abilities congruent with senior executive core competencies. The developmental assignment must prepare the Fellow for the occupation or function in which he or she is likely to be placed.

Developmental assignments are different from rotational assignments. Rotational assignments are often used to allow Fellows to gain a broader perspective of the Executive Branch of the Federal Government. While a rotation can take Fellows to another bureau, division, office, program, or even another agency, rotations may or may not meet the qualifications for a developmental assignment as outlined above. Rotational assignments that are not at least 4 consecutive months in length, are not in the occupation or functional area of the Fellows target position, or do not have full time management and/or technical responsibilities consistent with the Fellow's IDP, do not meet the requirements found in 5 CFR 362.204(b)(4)(i)(A) for a developmental assignment.

Prior to engaging in a developmental assignment outside of the agency, a Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement must be developed by the program office, submitted to the servicing HR office and then cleared by the local Office of General Counsel (if an assignment is outside of the federal government). A copy of any developmental assignment outside of the department must be submitted to the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13) for review.

MENTORING. Professional mentoring relationships are important to the success of the PMF program. Each PMF participant should have at least one management level mentor, in addition to other mentors, both formal and informal. Supervisors, Sponsor(s), and the Career Intern Coordinator along with the ETS should work collaboratively to facilitate these relationships. Employees have the responsibility to initiate these types of relationships.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

Once identified, each mentor of record will need to fill out quarterly forms to demonstrate regular mentor and protégé interaction. The form can be found in [Appendix G](#). For information regarding mentoring and DOE-sponsored programs, managers and servicing HR offices may contact the department's Enterprise Training Services (ETS).

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

PERFORMANCE PLANS. Managers must develop performance standards for each PMF participant. Managers must apply the same standards under the current DOE Performance Management System for Non-Supervisory Employees since the participant is a DOE federal employee. Performance standards will often vary depending on the work required of the participant for both their assigned position as well as any rotational assignment. All performance standards must be completed and submitted to the local servicing HR office within the first 90 days following the appointment.

Performance plans and appraisals shall not deviate from the Department's established performance management standards and forms currently set forward in the DOE Performance Management Policy. Organizations **cannot** design a performance sub-system specifically for a PMF participant. Like any other DOE performance plan, it must contain critical elements pertaining to the position and directly align to the organization's strategic goals and mission. Performance objectives for PMF participants should remain consistent with the IDP and any other on-the-job training experiences planned for the fiscal year. When communicating performance expectations to PMF participants, supervisors will fully explain the relationship between an intern's performance objectives and training requirements, achieving organizational goals and objectives, and ultimately achieving the mission.

During the progress review, if a PMF participant is falling short of "Meets Expectations" in any performance element, the manager should address the issue informally with their employee. If an intern receives a performance rating for the lowest level in any performance element, the intern must receive a rating of "Fails to Meet Expectations". As a result, the intern will not be eligible to receive a promotion or performance award. If the employee is in a probationary period, consideration must be given to terminating the employee. If the employee is not in a probationary period, consideration must be given to removing the employee from the internship program. Managers must consult with their servicing HR office to determine the most suitable course of action.

WITHIN-GRADE INCREASES. PMF participants are eligible to receive within-grade increases in accordance with federal regulations.

PROMOTIONS. PMF participants are eligible for promotion. Time-in-grade restrictions do not apply, but participants must meet the qualifications through a combination of education, experience, and training for the next highest grade level. PMF participants are typically hired to positions that have promotion potential up to the GS-13 or equivalent at a minimum. However, PMF participants cannot be promoted to a level above the GS-13 while serving on a PMF appointment (see 5 CFR 362.204(d)(1)).

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

A PMF participant must serve no less than the equivalent of six months on a PMF appointment in order to be eligible for a review that can lead to a promotion. **Managers are not required to, nor is there a promise that a PMF participant will receive a promotion at any point during the 2-year program.** Promotions are typically based on a combination of performance and core training completion.

A manager must justify the promotion and submit a package to the servicing HR Office prior to the requested effective date. A Fellow cannot receive more than two (2) promotions in a 52-week period (see 5 CFR 300.603(b)(6)) unless the organization had developed a training program approved by OPM that allows the organization to exceed two promotions in a 52 -week period.

JUSTIFYING ACCELERATED PROMOTIONS. To justify an accelerated promotion in PMF it may require one or more of the following documents:

- IDP with completed training required for promotion to the next grade level (Required)
- Performance appraisal (Required)
- Written justification based on identified critical performance elements (Required). To see justification sample document refer to [Appendix C](#).

AWARDS. PMF participants are eligible to receive monetary or non-monetary awards based on a suggestion, invention, superior accomplishment, productivity gain, or other personal effort that contributes to the efficiency, economy, or other improvement of Government operations or achieves a significant reduction in paperwork. PMF employees are also eligible to receive performance-based awards or bonuses assuming they meet the criteria set forth in DOE Order 331.1-B.

OTHER CONDITIONS

MOVEMENT BETWEEN POSITIONS. According to 5 CFR 362.206, PMF participants may move from one position to another either inside the agency or to another agency. Any movement of an individual from one position to another does not signify the start of a new 2-year developmental assignment. The individual will continue to serve the remainder of their initial 2-year appointment in the new position. In order to move to a new position, the individual must meet the basic qualifications for the position. Additionally, the PMF participant cannot be moved to a position with promotion potential in excess of their current full performance level without competition.

ERB CERTIFICATION AND CONVERSION. Prior to eligibility for non-competitive conversion, PMF participants must be certified as having completed all PMF program requirements by the Executive Resource Board (ERB). The Program Office must submit the ERB certification package to the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer's Executive Resources Division for scheduling with the ERB. **All PMFs who have completed the program and have been ERB certified must be non-competitively converted to career-conditional or career status** (see 5 CFR 362.209(b)(1)). PMF participants must complete **all** required training curriculum and the 4-6 month developmental assignment in an effort to be considered for non-competitive conversion.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

Additionally, PMF participants are not required to serve a probationary period following their conversion to the competitive service. The 2-year intern period under which the employee is appointed serves as the probationary (trial) period. Additionally, the time served in this appointment does count toward gaining career status. Any time spent under this or other federal appointment must be considered in determining whether to convert the participant to career or career-conditional status.

ERB CERTIFICATION AND CONVERSION DOCUMENTATION. The following documentation must be submitted to the HR office prior to conversion:

- SF-52 Conversion Action
- ERB Board Sheet with justification for conversion (see Appendix M)
- Reference Check Sheet (see Appendix N)
- All Performance Appraisals
- IDP with documented completion dates for required training and rotational assignments
- Letter from the developmental assignment supervisor detailing the participant's performance during the PMF's 4-6 month assignment

EXTENSION OF A PMF APPOINTMENT. The initial appointment for PMF is set for two years. DOE acknowledges that sometimes circumstances may arise that impact the 2-year period requirement. As a result, a request to extend the appointment of a PMF participant must be submitted to the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer, Office of Strategic Planning and Policy, Employment Solutions Division (HC-13). There are two types of extensions that may be requested:

1. The department can authorize an extension of a PMF appointment for an additional 120 calendar days (see 5 CFR 362.203(a)(3)(iv)). Justifications must be submitted to HC-13 no later than 30 calendar days prior to the 2-year anniversary date and contain at a minimum:
 - Reason for extension
 - Proposed timeline to complete of training requirements justified with training dates
 - If it is personal reason, the intent of the Intern and proposed return to duty date.
2. Extensions in excess of 120 calendar days and up to 1 year in length must be approved by OPM (see CFR 362.203(a)(3)(iii)). Request for an extension beyond 120 calendar days must first be submitted to the HC-13 for review no later than 100 calendar days prior to the 2-year anniversary date and subsequently forwarded to OPM for consideration by HC-13.

BREAKS IN THE PROGRAM. If there is a period where the PMF participant is unable to work due to circumstances beyond their control (i.e. unforeseen health issues, family emergency, etc), a break in the program may be approved in advance by the local servicing HR office. The period of the break in program may not exceed three months in duration. The supervisor of the PMF participant must submit a written justification to the servicing HR office when requesting a break in program for the PMF participant. At this point, the individual will be placed on Leave without Pay (LWOP) for the period of the break in the program. As with any LWOP personnel action, HR offices must follow the guidance outlined in the *Guide to Processing Personnel Actions* when determining if and when an SF-50 is required. The local servicing HR office must notify the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13) of the

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

break in program. Any break over three months (accumulative) in the program cannot be approved by the local servicing HR office. Servicing HR offices must submit a written justification for extension(s) beyond the three months to HC-13 no later than 30 calendar days prior to the NTE date/proposed return date.

The rationale for extensions beyond four months may include:

- Extreme health issue/treatment
- Extended military deployment or commitment
- Unique educational opportunity not to exceed six months in length
- Compelling departmental interest due to unique skills required in an identified mission-critical occupational series.

If an extension beyond the three months is not granted, the PMF participant must immediately be removed from service.

SEPARATION OR TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT. The HR office must be informed of any proposed action to separate a Fellow on account of performance or conduct. An appointment may be terminated for any of the following reasons:

1. Resignation;
2. Suspension, expulsion, or withdrawal from his or her educational institution;
3. Unsatisfactory work performance or conduct (must be properly documented); or
4. Failure to complete program training requirements

PROBATIONARY PERIOD. If a PMF participant is non-competitively converted after the two year program, the time spent by participants in the FCIP can be credited toward the mandatory 1 year probationary period, regardless of work schedule, so long as the participant is in a pay status. (see 5 CFR 315.802). For the purpose of this program, the 2-year program essentially serves as the probationary period for the PMF participant.

REDUCTION IN FORCE (RIF). Participants are placed in the excepted service in Tenure Group 2. The employee does not have vested rights to be non-competitively converted to a competitive service position.

Roles and Responsibilities

Servicing Human Resources Offices

- Initiate, develop and maintain contacts with colleges, universities, minority/non-minority professional organizations, etc in collaboration with the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13).
- Participate in the PMF job fair with the objective of identifying and interviewing talent that could become potential DOE hires.
- Process personnel actions pertaining to the PMF and assure compliance with regulatory statutes and DOE policies.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

- Consult with managers/supervisors on most effective on-site recruitment and hiring strategies.
- Utilize the SF-52 Tracker to assess and track the phases of the PMF hiring process
- Advise managers/supervisor on statutory and program requirements.
- Measure the success of the PMF in completing mandatory requirements.
- Identify a PMF Program Coordinator (could also be the Corporate Intern Coordinator).

PMF Program Coordinator/Corporate Intern Coordinator

- Assist the PMF participants with personal and professional development, including on-site programmatic and personnel issues.
- Coordinate and finalize rotational assignments with input from the PMF participant.
- Coordinate all PMF activities between the Employment Solutions Division, servicing HR offices and the program or field office where the PMF is employed.
- Maintain records and status information regarding training and development.
- Conduct internal reviews to assure statutory requirements are met.
- Manage data call/reporting submissions to DOE.

Office of Learning and Workforce Development (HC 20)

- Oversee the training and developmental requirements of the DOE PMF Program.
- Collaborate with the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13) on training requirements.
- Ensure the availability of training courses/activities as it pertains to the core curriculum.
- Provide direction and guidance on training and development implementation to HR offices and PMF participant.
- Ensure centralized training activities with field and headquarters offices.
- Assist HC-13, CIC, PMF participants, managers as well as program and field offices to coordinate rotational assignments among headquarters, field offices, laboratories and/or contractor organizations.
- Manage and ensure IDPs are completed and outlined training activities support the goals and as described in the IDP.

Office of Strategic Planning and Policy, Employment Solutions Division (HC-13)

- Conduct oversight activities of the PMF to ensure regulatory and Agency compliance.
- Develop and share contacts with colleges, universities, minority/non-minority professional organizations, and other recruitment sources.
- Develop corporate marketing and branding strategies and materials.
- Develop corporate guidance, procedures and policy in the execution of the intern program.
- Design core training curriculum.
- Design metrics to assess effectiveness and efficiency as it relates to recruitment, marketing, and outreach events.

Program Offices, Field Offices, and Support Offices

- Provide visible and continuing, personal engagement, commitment and support of the program.
- Provide necessary support to servicing HR offices to assure the hiring of quality candidates. This is true not only of recruitment, but also for training and development.
- Integrate the use of intern programs, especially the PMF, as part of workforce planning to address critical needs and succession planning.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

- Hold leaders/managers and supervisors accountable for the development and mentoring of PMF participants.
- Accountable for human capital decision-making.
- Designate a sponsor for the PMF employee who will develop and oversee the coordination and training.
- Support corporate marketing and branding efforts designed by HC-13 that will promote and enhance intern programs.

PMF Program Participant

- Establish commitment to complete the program and the servicing organization.
- Work cooperatively with their managers to develop an Individual Development Plan that charts the course of their professional and personal development for the next two years.
- Participate in all program-sponsored activities, including regularly-scheduled meetings and training activities.
- Develop, contribute, and share ideas for developmental assignments and training opportunities with you manager in the creation of your IDP.
- Complete travel related paperwork, as well as program-requested training and rotational information in a timely fashion.
- Be proactive and engaged in seeking developmental, educational, and training opportunities.
- Assume responsibility for keeping abreast of program updates and information from OPM. Share the information with managers and other stakeholders, when necessary.
- Be open and honest with managers and program staff regarding information and challenges related to professional or personal issues affecting PMF program participation.
- Work with the PMF Coordinator/CIC to facilitate solutions to any problems that may arise.
- Provide information relating to record keeping during the PMF cycle.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

THE DOE STUDENT CAREER EXPERIENCE PROGRAM (SCEP)

SCEP PROGRAM BACKGROUND

As authorized by Executive Order 12015, SCEP provides an opportunity for undergraduate, graduate, and/or doctoral students to be placed in a track that can potentially lead to permanent employment upon completion of their degree requirements. While the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) is designed to be a “gateway experience” to federal employment, SCEP is a program where managers and supervisors can non-competitively transition promising temporary interns into a program that has the potential to lead to a non-competitive appointment in the federal service. SCEP appointments can take place at any point in the year so long as the candidate maintains a student status. All rules regarding veterans’ preference, nepotism, and merit system principles still apply.

SCEP PROGRAM FEATURES

Must be a student to participate. A student is defined as an individual enrolled at least half-time in one of the following educational institutions: high school, accredited home school, trade school, vocational/technical school, junior/community college, four-year college or university, or graduate school.

There is not a requirement to formally advertise a SCEP position through public notice, but the hiring process must demonstrate fair and open competition in the recruitment and selection process.

A SCEP hire requires the usage of a full or partial FTE (depending on the work schedule) for an appointment to be made.

SCEPs can work during semester breaks (fall, winter, spring and summer)

SCEPs can be appointed at any grade level, so long as they are considered a student (see definition of a student listed in the Appendix under [Key Definitions](#)) and they meet the basic qualifications for that grade level. Hires typically occur at the GS-2 up to the GS-7 level depending on the qualification requirements.

SCEP positions must be classified as a student trainee series (GS-099) when hiring at the GS-2 through GS-4 grade level, or equivalent. A full listing of the student trainee positions can be found at: <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/SEC-IV/A/GS-CSST.HTM>.

The position to which the SCEP participant is appointed must be related to their field of study.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

SCEP PROGRAM FEATURES (continued)

SCEPs are eligible for non-competitive conversion to the competitive service following the completion of 640 hours of Federal Service. All 640 hours must be gained prior to completion of the student's requirements for graduation. Requirements for graduation typically take place before the actual graduation day/ceremony.

320 hours of the required 640 hours of Federal service prior to non-competitive conversion can come from Federal work experience gained while not under a SCEP appointment. The credit for the prior work experience must come from work directly related to the expected targeted position (i.e. STEP, stipend-based internship, contractor intern, volunteer experience, etc).

Additionally, 320 hours of the required 640 hours of Federal Service prior to non-competitive conversion can be granted if the individual graduates with a 3.5 GPA.

Only 320 hours of the full 640 can be granted. These two flexibilities CANNOT be combined to add up to the full 640 hours.

Time-in-Grade restrictions do not apply. SCEPs are eligible for accelerated promotions and annual step increases.

The agency has 120-days to convert a SCEP employee to the competitive service. The 120 day period begins immediately following completion of the student's degree program requirements, not on the graduation day. Agencies are not obligated to convert students following completion of SCEP requirements, but students must be terminated prior to the expiration of the 120 day period.

Items required to hire a SCEP student

- SF-52 indicating action to hire a SCEP
- Updated official college or high school transcript
- Signed working agreement between college/university and DOE
- Résumé
- Position Descriptions, preferably including positions for career ladder promotions

BASIC SCEP ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants appointed to the SCEP must meet the following basic eligibility requirements:

1. Be at least 16 years old (as per 5 CFR 551.601(a)).
2. Be a U.S. citizen, or national, or lawfully admitted to the United States as a permanent resident or otherwise authorized to be employed (as evidenced by documents proving citizenship).

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

3. As of December 16, 2009, the modified provision of the Consolidated Appropriation Act, 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-117, div C, tit VII, §704, has changed the rules on foreign nationals. There is no longer a list of exemptions based on country of origin, and in its place is a requirement that the foreign national **(1)** is a citizen of the United States; **(2)** is a person who is lawfully admitted for permanent residence and is seeking citizenship as outlined in 8 U.S.C. 1324b(a)(3)(B); **(3)** is a person who is admitted as a refugee under 8 U.S.C. 1157 or is granted asylum under 8 U.S.C. 1158 and has filed a declaration of intention to become a lawful permanent resident and then a citizen when eligible; or **(4)** is a person who owes allegiance to the United States: lawfully admitted for permanent residence and seeking citizenship as outlined in the statute.
4. The individual must be enrolled half-time as a student in any of the following accredited educational programs: High school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma; Vocational/Technical certificate; Associate Degree; Baccalaureate Degree; Graduate Degree; or Professional Degree. For the definition and criteria of a student, please visit Key Definitions.
5. The program participant must be in good academic standing as determined by their academic institution (generally a GPA of 2.0 or higher).
6. The participant must meet personnel suitability and physical requirements for the position to which they are applying.
7. The participant must meet the OPM Qualification Standard for the series and grade of the position.
8. Male applicants for SCEP born after 12/31/59 who are required to register with the Selective Service under Section 3 of the Military Selective Service Act must be registered (or must have registered at the time that they were required to do so) in order to be eligible for appointment under this program 5 U.S.C. § 3328(a) and 5 CFR Part 300, Subpart G).

ADDITIONAL SCEP ELIGIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

RELATIVES. Students may work with a relative when there is no direct reporting relationship and the relative is not in a position to influence or control the student's appointment, employment, promotion, or advancement (as per 5 CFR 213.3202 (a)(7)).

ONLINE COURSES. Students who take online courses are eligible to participate in DOE's SCEP if all other basic and additional eligibility requirements are met.

HOME-SCHOOLED HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS. Providing they are otherwise eligible, home-schooled students may participate in the DOE SCEP if they are in either an accredited home-school or in a State-approved home-school curriculum. Written documentation attesting to the validity of the accreditation will be needed prior to setting an Enter on Duty date.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION. Students who gained part of their education internationally must: (1) Meet all citizenship requirements and (2) Have their foreign education interpreted by a credential evaluation service. For specific guidelines regarding this service, please refer to <https://www.opm.gov/qualifications/policy/ApplicationOfStd-04.asp>

REQUIRED SCEP APPOINTMENT DOCUMENTATION

SCEP participants must submit the following documentation to be considered for an appointment:

- OF-612, Optional Application of Federal Employment, or résumé
- Official documentation verifying current or projected enrollment as a student must be obtained from the school before the effective date of the appointment. Evidence of enrollment or accepted enrollment in a degree, diploma, or certificate program at an accredited school may include:
 - Official Transcript
 - Letter from the Registrar's or Dean's office
 - Advanced Registration Schedule
- Evidence of good academic standing as determined by the academic institution (generally a GPA of 2.0 or higher)
- If claiming veterans' preference, the submission of a DD-214 or an SF-15 is required to adjudicate veterans' preference.
- Evidence of citizenship
- Participants must have completed and submitted the required DOE SCEP Working Agreement demonstrating the endorsement of their academic institution to participate in the program.

SCEP RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION REQUIREMENTS

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES. HR offices with delegated HR authority must establish internal standard operating procedures outlining the specific functions and designated roles and responsibilities that govern at a minimum: job advertisement, application process, and referral and selection under an SCEP appointment. The document should also incorporate how workforce integration strategies will be utilized to effectively identify occupations targeted for SCEP.

WORKFORCE PLANNING. Although the use of an SCEP appointment is not a guaranteed permanent placement, managers should assess their FTE usage to determine if permanent placement is warranted and meets workforce needs. These assessments must be determined through a workforce planning methodology that is integrated into the organization's workforce/staffing plan(s). A SCEP appointment shall not be used to fill short-term needs, competencies, and/or skill gaps. Any targeting of specific

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

individuals in an effort to circumvent fair and open competition is strictly prohibited. Managers must endeavor to conduct a fair and open competition in accordance with merit system principles.

RECRUITMENT/STAFFING AND CLASSIFICATION. In light of merit system principles, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer requires that all SCEP positions be advertised broadly and/or in targeted recruitment campaigns in an effort to uphold fair and equitable access to federal employment.

The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer requires that a SCEP position be advertised for no less than 3 days. The servicing HR office may advertise SCEP job opportunities using the internet, print media, radio, or television in combination with their broad-based and/or targeted recruitment plan. The servicing HR office must document both the recruitment strategy and the rating system (making sure to adjudicate veterans' preference).

The local servicing HR office must maintain the recruitment records for each SCEP appointment for a minimum of three years. Each SCEP hiring action should document the following items:

- Recruitment Plan
- List of applicants for the position
- Referral list including adjudicated veterans' preference
- Selection criteria for the position

All personnel actions related to an SCEP appointment should incorporate the mandatory statements and authorization codes as set forth in the OPM Guide to Processing Personnel Actions (<http://www.opm.gov/feddata/gppa/gppa.asp> in Chapter 11).

Appropriate appointment citations are as follows:

| <i>R U L E</i> | <i>If the person</i> | <i>And the appointment</i> | <i>And the person</i> | <i>Then NOAC is</i> | <i>NOA is</i> | <i>Auth code is</i> | <i>And Authority is (See Notes 1-4 of this table)</i> |
|----------------------------|---|--|--|-----------------------------|------------------|---------------------|---|
| 24 | Is a student in a high school diploma program | Is under the Student Career Experience Program of the Student Educational Employment Program | Is not on your agency's rolls | 170 | Exc Appt | YBM | Sch B, 213.3202(b)-HS |
| 25 | | | Is already on the rolls of your agency | 570 | Conv to Exc Appt | | |
| 26 | Is a student in a post-high school certificate or diploma program (e.g., vocational or technical certificate program) | | Is not on your agency's rolls | 170 | Exc Appt | YGM | Sch B, 213.3202(b)-Voc/Tech |
| 27 | | | Is already on the rolls of your agency | 570 | Conv to Exc Appt | | |
| 28 | Is a student in an associate degree program | | Is not on your agency's rolls | 170 | Exc Appt | Y3M | Sch B, 213.3202(b)-Assoc |
| 29 | | | Is already on the rolls of your agency | 570 | Conv to Exc Appt | | |
| 30 | Is a student in a baccalaureate degree program | | Is not on your agency's rolls | 170 | Exc Appt | Y1M | Sch B, 213.3202(b)-BA/BS |
| 31 | | | Is already on the rolls of your agency | 570 | Conv to Exc Appt | | |
| 32 | Is a student in a graduate or professional degree program | | Is not on your agency's rolls | 170 | Exc Appt | Y2M | Sch B, 213.3202(b)-Grad/Prof |
| 33 | | | Is already on the rolls of your agency | 570 | Conv to Exc Appt | | |

* Remarks to be shown on the SF-50 (Appointment Limitations):

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

- Remark Code A31 – This appointment is intended to continue through completion of education and study-related work requirements. An agency may noncompetitively appoint the student to a career or career-conditional appointment within 120 days after satisfactory completion of the educational requirements and satisfactory completion of at least 640 hours of career-related work experience. The work experience must have been completed prior to or concurrently with the completion of the requirements of your educational program.

WRITTEN TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS. Written tests, including the Administrative Careers with America (ACWA) Exams, are not required for selecting SCEP candidates.

RATING AND RANKING. Although applicants appointed under SCEP are exempt from the rating and ranking requirements under the Excepted Service, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer requires that each servicing HR office apply a rating system that explains and defends hiring decisions to assure the process is open and fair.

VETERANS' PREFERENCE. During the rating and finalist notification process, HR offices must ensure that interviews and selections adhere to veteran's preference order. Depending on the veterans' preference category on the referral list, the same process and procedures that are used in the competitive service apply when deciding who to interview and select.

The change in this process for excepted service hires is as a result of a U.S. Court of Appeals decision. The decision under *Gingery v. Department of Defense*, 550 F.3d. 1347 (Fed.Cir. 2008) issued by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit invalidated an OPM regulation dealing with veterans' preference, since the regulation provided less protection than what was provided for in Federal statute. Since the SCEP is an excepted service appointment, the Court ruled that selection into the excepted service must be conducted in the same manner and under the same conditions as required for the competitive service. As a result, 5 CFR 302.401(b) under the excepted service was ruled invalid. Therefore, to adjudicate veterans' preference under a SCEP appointment, the HR office must apply the same procedures as used under the competitive process when assessing veterans' preference. Staff should refer to OPM's Vet Guide for additional information: (<http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp#2Ajudicat>).

It is important to note that for 30% or more compensable veterans, the HR office must obtain permission for pass-over from OPM while simultaneously notifying the Office of the Strategic Planning and Policy, Policy Division (HC-11) of this course of action. While requesting OPM's approval, the HR Office must notify the preference eligible of the proposed pass over of the reasons thereof, and his/her right to respond.

- This notification must be sent in a timely manner to the preference eligible's last known address.

Managers should consult with their servicing HR office for questions regarding the adjudication process.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

VETERAN PASS OVER. If a Finalist is preference eligible and they express an interest in working for an agency, the application must be considered. For purposes of this reference book, “express an interest” means that the applicants has initiated contact with the agency in person or by other direct communication (i.e. telephone, email, formal letter) and asked for consideration. The types of contact can include: dropping off a résumé at a job fair, sending a résumé by mail/email, delivering a résumé in person to a manager, supervisor, or HR office that is considering an appointment.

If the selecting official decides not to hire the preference eligible or the preference eligible who expressed interest in a particular position, then a written justification must be submitted to the servicing HR office as to why the preference eligible did not meet the criteria for the position. The type of veteran will determine the course of action. Staff should refer to the Vet Guide for additional information; (<http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp#2Ajudicat>).

In general, a written justification accomplishes two objectives. A preference eligible is entitled, upon request, to obtain a copy of the reasons he or she was passed over in favor of a non-preference eligible. Secondly, if the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) officials audit the agency’s corporate internship programs process, the written justification serves as documentation that preference eligibles who were part of the agency applicant pool received proper consideration.

CASE FILE MANAGEMENT. SCEP appointments require documentation of the hiring process. Only servicing HR offices with delegated HR authority are authorized to make SCEP appointments. Basic HR functions such as classification, adjudicating veterans preference, establishing and issuing referral lists, and tentative and formal job offers are functions that must be performed by the servicing HR office. These functions cannot be re-delegated to management.

All personnel actions for the SCEP should incorporate the mandatory statements and authorization codes as set forth in the OPM Guide to Processing Personnel Actions. For a copy of this document visit the following website <http://www.opm.gov/feddata/gppa/gppa.asp> and review Chapter 11. Additionally, a SCEP checklist is provided in the Appendix, but offices are not mandated to use these forms if one has already been established. The checklists serve as guidance only and do not preclude the requirements set forth under the CFR.

SCEP EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

STUDENT VERIFICATION. Each semester, trimester, or quarter (depending on the academic institution’s class schedule) after the initial appointment, the Corporate Intern Coordinator at the servicing HR office must obtain verification, as outlined in the *SCEP Appointment Documentation* section below, that the student is still enrolled and continues to meet eligibility requirements.

STUDENT WORKING AGREEMENT. SCEP participants must sign and submit the DOE SCEP Working Agreement (see [Appendix B](#)) prior to setting a date to enter on duty to ensure the agency, the academic institution, and the participant is in agreement regarding the expected work arrangements and conditions.

PAY ADMINISTRATION AND BENEFITS

WORK SCHEDULES. Program participants may work full-time or part-time. There are no limitations on the number of hours a student can work up to 40 hours per week. However, the work schedule cannot interfere with the student's academic schedule. With supervisory approval, schedules for students working full-time may be flexible or compressed.

Work hours and work projects should not interfere with the participant's educational responsibilities. Students may be placed on either a part-time or full-time schedule.

PAY. Students in the SCEP must be paid according to the criteria set forth in the appropriate General Schedule, pay band, or wage grade classification standard for the job. Typically, a SCEP participant will be employed at Step 1 of the General Schedule grade level for which they qualify based on a combination of education attainment and relevant work experience. If you are setting pay based solely on education, you can use the Appendix A as a reference to set pay via the General Schedule ([click here](#) to view Appendix A).

The majority of SCEP participants will be eligible for a GS-2 through GS-4 position if they are currently an undergraduate student. Students in graduate school may be eligible for a GS-5, 7, or 9 depending in their course credit completion (refer to Appendix A). Work experience may also be combined with educational experience in determining pay. Managers and supervisors should work with their servicing HR office early in the recruitment process to assist them in making qualification determinations. HR specialists can refer to the following web site for additional assistance in determining qualifications: www.opm.gov/qualifications.

STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT/RECRUITMENT INCENTIVES. SCEP participants may be eligible to receive recruitment incentives (i.e. advance in hire, recruitment bonus, student loan repayment, tuition reimbursement). The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer recommends that recruitment incentives be utilized judiciously for SCEP participants. If a recruitment incentive is utilized, a written justification must be submitted to the servicing HR office for consideration. Some examples of acceptable justification rationales can be found in 5 CFR 531.212(c) and include, but are not limited to:

- Pay retention based on current or historical salary of the applicant
- Proven difficulty in hiring within a particular occupational series without the use of incentives
- Excessive recent turnover
- Exceptional educational or vocational achievement.

All justifications for student loan repayment and recruitment bonus should follow the guidance set forward in 5 CFR 231.212 and DOE Order 322.1B and be sure to include a signed continuing service agreement by the recipient prior to the receipt of either a recruitment bonus or student loan repayment. The justification must be sent to the HR Office prior to the job offer to ensure that the final job offer letter has the best compensation offer included.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

ADVANCED PAY RATE. Although a SCEP appointee is eligible to receive an advance-in-hire to a higher step within the grade level, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer discourages its use for student programs like SCEP or the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) due to the fact that there is not a rating and ranking system that can be fairly applied across all disciplines for student programs to justify advances in pay.

ANNUAL AND SICK LEAVE. Students in the SCEP are eligible to accrue annual and sick leave (5 CFR 213.3202(b)(16)(i)).

FEDERAL BENEFITS. Participants in the SCEP are eligible to receive basic life insurance, retirement benefits, and participate in the Federal Government's Thrift Savings Plan. A SCEP is only eligible to receive health care benefits if their appointment is expected to cover 1 year or longer. (5 CFR 213.3202(b)(16)(ii) and 5 CFR 890.102(c)(2)). If a SCEP participant elects to receive health benefits the employee must pay 100 percent of the employee portion. The SCEP participant may also be responsible for paying a portion of the government contribution if the student is working less than a full-time schedule.

A SCEP participant is enrolled into the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) so long as their employment in the program is 1 year or longer.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS. SCEP participants are eligible to attend training courses and have any training related travel reimbursed. There is not a dedicated training program required for the SCEP. However, this should not preclude a manager from identifying and supporting investments in any job-specific training.

Within 45 days of the initial appointment, the manager must determine the necessary general and job-specific training for the SCEP participant to complete as part of an annual Individual Development Plan (IDP). The manager must submit an IDP to the HR Office as a record of the required training necessary to support the SCEP participant's development.

In the event that a program office desires to offer tuition assistance to a SCEP participant for collegiate coursework, such support is permissible under 5 CFR 213.3202(b)(17). Additionally, the program office should follow the guidance set forth in DOE Order 360.1-1B, the Federal Employee Training Manual for documenting such training support. At a minimum Program Offices should ensure that the coursework is directly related to the occupation as well as the overall mission and function of the office. Additionally, a continuing service agreement should be in place.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

PERFORMANCE PLANS. Managers must develop performance standards for each SCEP participant if the participant is expected to be appointed for six months or longer. Managers must apply the same standards under the current DOE Performance Management System for Non-Supervisory Employees since the participant is a DOE federal employee. Performance standards will often vary depending on the work required of the participant for both their assigned position as well as any rotational assignment. All performance standards must be completed and submitted to the local servicing HR office within the first 30 days following the appointment.

Performance plans and appraisals shall not deviate from the Department's established performance management standards and forms currently set forward in the DOE Performance Management Policy. Organizations **cannot** design a performance sub-system specifically for SCEP participants. Like any other DOE performance plan, it must contain critical elements pertaining to the position and directly align to the organization's strategic goals and mission. When communicating performance expectations to SCEP participants, supervisors will fully explain the relationship between an intern's performance objectives and training requirements (if any) to achieving organizational goals and objectives and ultimately the mission accomplishment.

During the progress review, if an SCEP participant is falling short of "Meets Expectations" in any performance element, the manager should address the issue informally with their employee. If an intern receives a performance rating for the lowest level in any performance element, the intern must receive a rating of Fails to Meet Expectations. As a result, the intern will not be eligible to receive a promotion or performance award. If the employee is in a probationary period, consideration must be given to terminating the employee. If the employee is not in a probationary period, consideration must be given to removing the employee from the internship program. Managers must consult with their servicing HR office to determine the most suitable course of action.

WITHIN-GRADE INCREASES. SCEP participants are eligible to receive within-grade increases.

PROMOTIONS. SCEP participants are eligible for promotion. Time-in-grade restrictions do not apply, but participants must meet the qualifications through a combination of education, experience, and training for the next highest grade level.

SCEP participants are typically hired to a position that does not have promotion potential. For that reason, promotions under the SCEP program are categorized as reappointment actions to the next highest grade level. Reappointment to the next highest grade level is typically as a result of completing additional education which qualifies the participant for the higher grade level. To see the corresponding grade level regarding educational attainment visit [Appendix A](#).

Program offices seeking to re-appoint a SCEP participant must develop and submit an SF-52 and a position description for the next grade level to the servicing HR office prior to the requested effective date. The position description must then be classified prior to the reappointment action taking effect. There is not a requirement to formally advertise reappointments.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

Additionally, promotions may also be based upon performance. A SCEP participant must serve no less than the equivalent of six months of full-time work to become eligible for a promotion. A SCEP participant cannot receive more than two (2) promotions in a 52-week period.

JUSTIFYING PROMOTIONS. To justify a promotion in SCEP it may require one or more of the following documents:

- Updated transcript showcasing additional educational attainment (required)
- IDP with completed required training for promotion to the (required if not utilizing educational attainment)
- Performance appraisal (required if not utilizing educational attainment)
- Written justification based on identified critical performance elements (Required if not utilizing educational attainment. To see a justification sample document, review [Appendix C](#) in this reference book.)

AWARDS. SCEP participants are eligible to receive monetary or non-monetary awards based on a suggestion, invention, superior accomplishment, productivity gain, or other personal effort that contributes to the efficiency, economy, or other improvement of Government operations or achieves a significant reduction in paperwork. SCEP employees are also eligible to receive performance-based awards or bonuses assuming they meet the criteria set forth in DOE Order 331.1-B.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

ESTABLISHING ASSIGNMENTS. Before students begin their employment, the manager or supervisor should plan and establish structured work assignments. The purpose of the program is to provide the student with on-the-job experience that will develop competencies in the target position at the time of the conversion.

NON-COMPETITIVE CONVERSION. SCEP participants are eligible for non-competitive conversion to career-conditional or career status in the federal competitive service. SCEP participants must complete 640 hours of work in a position related to their degree field in an effort to be eligible for non competitive conversion.

Not all 640 hours must be gained while the student is employed under the SCEP appointment authority. If the student was previously working under a federal student temporary appointment (Student Temporary Employment Program), all of the work hours may count toward the 640 hours required for non-competitive conversion. However, in order for these hours to be considered, the work performed under the temporary appointment must be was related to the participant's degree field and the target position. Detailed work schedules must be submitted at the time of conversion when considering work hours not attributed to experience gained under the SCEP appointment.

Managers may credit up to 320 hours out of the 640 hours in one of two ways: 1) Superior academic achievement and exceptional job performance. 2) Non-federally based internship in a directly related position to the student's major. This experience may be gained through a non-federally based internship, volunteer experience, stipend-based program, or contractor internship. A detailed work

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

schedule under the program must be submitted to justify the number of hours credited toward the 320-hour credit.

Superior academic achievement is defined as individuals who are expected to graduate with at 3.5 Grade Point Average (GPA) (organizations may round a 3.45 GPA to 3.5 to meet this criterion. Graduating in the top 10% of their class is also grounds for superior academic achievement as is being a member of a nationally recognized honor society. In addition to superior academic achievement, the SCEP participant must also achieve exceptional job performance during this time as well. Exceptional job performance is defined as the highest performance rating (Significantly Exceeds Expectations or SE) for all performance elements under the established DOE performance plan system. Therefore, both superior academic achievement and exceptional performance are needed by the SCEP participant in order to receive the 320 hour credit.

Only a total of up to 320 hours total can be credited toward the mandatory 640 hours required for non-competitive conversion. Managers cannot combine these two flexibilities in order to reach the 640 hours required for non-competitive conversion. Lastly, SCEP students are eligible to be non-competitively converted to positions that are career ladders with higher promotion potential (see 5 CFR 213.3202(b)).

NON-COMPETITIVE CONVERSION DOCUMENTATION. The following documentation is required to be submitted to the local servicing HR office prior to conversion:

- SF-52 Conversion Action
- All position descriptions for any career ladder position
- Transcripts demonstrating completion of degree requirements
- Most recent Performance Appraisal (if appointed greater than 90 days)
- Work schedule demonstrating 640 hours have been accomplished. In the event that the student receives crediting hours under an appointment other than SCEP, a description of duties along with the type of appointment is necessary.

BREAKS IN THE PROGRAM. If there is a period where the SCEP participant is unable work due to circumstances beyond their control (i.e. unforeseen health issues, family emergency, etc), a break in the program may be approved in advance by the local servicing HR office. The period of the break in program may not exceed three months in duration. The supervisor of the SCEP participant must submit a written justification to servicing HR office requesting a break in program for the SCEP participant. At this point, the individual will be placed on Leave without Pay (LWOP) for the period of the break in the program. The local servicing HR office must notify the Employment Solutions Division of the break in program. Any break over three months cannot be approved by the local servicing HR office.

For breaks in the program longer than three months, the local servicing HR office must submit a justification to the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13) for approval. A six month break in service does not have to be requested at the outset of the proposed break. If the local servicing HR office has granted a 3 month break in program, an additional three months can be requested from HC-13. Any request and justification for an extension beyond the three months granted by the local servicing HR

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

office must be received by HC-13 no less than 30 calendar days prior to the end of the initial three month break in program.

The rationale for extensions beyond four months may include:

- Extreme health issue/treatment
- Extended military deployment or commitment
- Temporary inability to maintain student status
- Unique educational opportunity not to exceed six months in duration
- Compelling departmental interest due to unique skills required in an identified mission-critical occupational series.

If an extension beyond the three months is not granted, the SCEP participant must immediately be removed from service.

SEPARATION OR TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT. The HR Office must be informed of any proposed action to separate a student on account of performance or conduct. An appointment may be terminated for any of the following reasons:

1. Resignation;
2. Suspension, expulsion, or withdrawal from his or her educational institution;
3. Unsatisfactory work performance or conduct (must be properly documented);
4. Failure to maintain academic standards; or
5. Inability of the program office to retain the student in the position; e.g., budget constraints, reduction-in-force, etc.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD. The time spent by participants in the SCEP can be credited toward the mandatory 1 year probationary period, regardless of work schedule, so long as the participant is in a pay status. (see 5 CFR 315.802).

REDUCTION IN FORCE (RIF). If the student has not completed his/her education requirements, students are covered by OPM's reduction in force regulations and are placed in excepted service, tenure group 2. As a temporary employee, the student has no vested right to remain employed and has no mandatory right to be non-competitively converted to a competitive service position.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Servicing Human Resources Offices

- Initiate, develop and maintain contacts with colleges, universities, minority/non-minority professional organizations, etc. in collaboration with the Office of Employment Solutions Division (HC-13) in the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy
- Participate in career/job fairs with the objective of building and maintaining long-term relationships and identify potential SCEP candidates.
- Conduct primary recruiting and hiring for respective sites/organizations.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

- Process personnel actions pertaining to the SCEP and assure compliance with regulatory statutes and DOE policies.
- Consult with managers/supervisors on most effective recruitment strategy.
- Utilize the SF-52 Tracker to assess and track the phases of the SCEP hiring process.
- Advise managers/supervisor on statutory and program requirements.
- Measure the success of the SCEP.
- Identify a Corporate Intern Coordinator (CIC).

Corporate Intern Coordinator

- Ensure collection of official transcripts for each semester that the SCEP participant is employed being sure to share with the servicing HR office for the purpose of record keeping
- Assist the SCEP participants with personal and professional development, including on-site programmatic and personnel issues.
- Coordinate and finalize rotational assignments.
- Coordinate all SCEP activities between servicing HR offices and the program or field office where the CIC is employed with the Employment Solutions Division.
- Maintain records and status information regarding training and development.
- Conduct internal reviews to assure statutory requirements are met.
- Manage data call/reporting submissions to DOE.

Office of Strategic Planning and Policy, Employment Solutions Division (HC-13)

- Conduct oversight activities of the SCEP to ensure regulatory and Agency compliance.
- Develop and share contacts with colleges, universities, minority/non-minority professional organizations, and other recruitment sources.
- Develop corporate marketing and branding strategies and materials.
- Develop corporate guidance, procedures, and policy in the execution of the intern program.
- Design core training curriculum.
- Design metrics to assess effectiveness and efficiency as it relates to career fairs.

Program Offices, Field Offices, and Support Offices

- Provide visible and continuing personal engagement, commitment, and support of the program.
- Provide necessary support to servicing HR offices to assure the hiring of quality candidates. This is true not only of recruitment, but also training and development.
- Integrate the use of intern programs, especially the SCEP, as part of workforce planning to address critical needs and succession planning.
- Hold leaders/managers and supervisors accountable for the development and mentoring of SCEP participants.
- Accountable for human capital decision-making.
- Designate a sponsor for the SCEP employee who will develop and oversee the coordination and training.
- Support corporate marketing and branding efforts designed by HC-13 that will promote and enhance intern programs.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

SCEP Intern

- Commit to the completion of the program and to the servicing organization.
- Work cooperatively with their managers to develop an Individual Development Plan.
- Participate in all program-sponsored activities, including regularly scheduled meetings and training activities.
- Complete travel related paperwork, as well as program-requested training and rotational information in a timely fashion.
- Be proactive and engaged in seeking developmental, educational, and training opportunities.
- Assume responsibility for keeping abreast of program-related information and sharing the information with managers and other stakeholders, when necessary.
- Be open and above-board with managers and program staff regarding information and challenges related to professional or personal issues affecting Program participation.
- Work with the CIC and Sponsor in order to facilitate solutions to any problems that may arise.

Academic Institution

- Designate a representative to work with the DOE SCEP Program Manager and/or other agency officials regarding the necessary information.
- Refer interested and qualified candidates to DOE without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, disability, etc. This includes allowing the participation of veterans discharged from the armed forces under honorable conditions.
- Furnish DOE with requested information related to participant's field of study, academic standing; and/or class attendance records upon request.
- Monitor academic progress upon DOE or student request from instructors.
- Inform DOE of any change in a SCEP participant's status, including reports on a student's progress and performance, upon request.

The DOE Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP)

STEP PROGRAM BACKGROUND

STEP is a program authorized by 5 CFR 213.3202(a) to provide opportunities for students, typically in high school and college, to gain work experience while enhancing their awareness of the Department of Energy’s mission and functions. STEP is designed to be a “gateway experience” where both the participant and the manager have the ability to assess the potential for future employment with the DOE. STEP appointments are part of the excepted service, thereby creating the opportunity for a streamlined selection process. Despite the ability for a swifter selection process, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer recommends that a fair and open competitive process be deployed in the selection of STEP participants.

Appointments for these positions can take place at any time in the year so long as the candidate maintains a student status. All rules governing veterans’ preference, nepotism, and priority referral of displaced Federal employees apply.

STEP PROGRAM FEATURES

| |
|--|
| Offers program office a “trial basis” for assessing the student’s skills, ability, and fit into the organization, typically served through a 10-week summer appointment. |
| Must be a student to participate (see the appendix in this desktop reference under the section entitled Key Definitions for the definition of a student). |
| STEP hire requires the usage of a partial FTE for an appointment to be made. |
| STEPs may be appointed for up to six months (all appointments over six months in length must go through background check prior to start date). |
| STEPs can work during semester breaks (fall, winter, spring) assuming their appointment has been terminated. |
| STEPs can be converted to Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) (see 5 CFR 213.3202(a)(15)(i)). |
| STEPs are eligible for promotions and step increases depending on pay plan. |
| STEPs can be appointed at any grade level, so long as they are considered a student (see definition of student listed above). Hires are intended to be limited to and typically occur at, the GS-1 to GS-4 level (high school and undergraduate students). |

STEP PROGRAM FEATURES (continued)

A student can be non-competitively re-appointed to a STEP position. There is not a limit to the number of times a student can be appointed under STEP.

A STEP appointment must be terminated once a student completes their academic requirements or no longer maintains their student status.

BASIC STEP ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants appointed to the STEP must meet the following basic eligibility requirements:

1. Be at least 16 years old (as per 5 CFR 551. 601(a)).
2. Be a U.S. citizen, national, lawfully admitted to the United States as a permanent resident, or otherwise authorized to be employed (as evidenced by documents proving citizenship).
3. As of December 16, 2009, the modified provision of the Consolidated Appropriation Act, 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-117, div C, tit VII, §704, has changed the rules on foreign nationals. There is no longer a list of exemptions based on country of origin, and in its place is a requirement that the foreign national **(1)** is a citizen of the United States; **(2)** is a person who is lawfully admitted for permanent residence and is seeking citizenship as outlined in 8 U.S.C. 1324b(a)(3)(B); **(3)** is a person who is admitted as a refugee under 8 U.S.C. 1157 or is granted asylum under 8 U.S.C. 1158 and has filed a declaration of intention to become a lawful permanent resident and then a citizen when eligible; or **(4)** is a person who owes allegiance to the United States: lawfully admitted for permanent residence and seeking citizenship as outlined in the statute.
4. The individual must be enrolled half-time as a student in any of the following accredited educational programs: High school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma; Vocational/Technical certificate; Associate Degree; Baccalaureate Degree; Graduate Degree; or Professional Degree. For the definition and criteria of a student, please visit Key Definitions.
5. The program participant must be in good academic standing as determined by their academic institution (generally a GPA of 2.0 or higher).
6. The participant must meet personnel suitability and physical requirements as required for the position to which they are applying.
7. The participant must meet the OPM Qualification Standard for the series and grade of the position.
8. Male applicants for STEP born after 12/31/59 who are required to register with the Selective Service under Section 3 of the Military Selective Service Act must be registered (or must have

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

registered at the time that they were required to do so) in order to be eligible for appointment under this program 5 U.S.C. § 3328(a) and 5 CFR Part 300, Subpart G).

ADDITIONAL STEP ELIGIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

RELATIVES. Students may work with a relative when there is no direct reporting relationship and the relative is not in a position to influence or control the student's appointment, employment, promotion, or advancement (as per 5 CFR 213.3202 (a)(7)).

ONLINE COURSES. Students who take online courses are eligible to participate in DOE's STEP if all other basic and additional eligibility requirements are met.

HOME-SCHOOLED HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS. Providing they are otherwise eligible, home-schooled students may participate in the DOE STEP if they are in either an accredited home-school or in a State-approved home-school curriculum. Written documentation attesting to the validity of the accreditation will be needed for prior to setting an Enter on Duty date.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION. Students who gained part of their education internationally must: (1) Meet all citizenship requirements and (2) Have their foreign education interpreted by a credential evaluation service. For specific guidelines regarding this service, please refer to <https://www.opm.gov/qualifications/policy/ApplicationOfStds-04.asp>

REQUIRED STEP APPOINTMENT DOCUMENTATION

STEP participants must submit the following documentation to be considered for an appointment:

- OF-612, Optional Application of Federal Employment, or résumé
- Official documentation verifying current or projected enrollment as a student must be obtained from the school before the effective date of the appointment. Evidence of enrollment or accepted enrollment in a degree, diploma, or certificate program at an accredited school may include:
 - Official Transcript
 - Letter from the Registrar's or Dean's office
 - Advanced Registration Schedule
- Evidence of good academic standing as determined by the academic institution (generally a GPA of 2.0 or higher)
- If claiming veterans' preference, the submission of a DD-214 or an SF-15 is required to adjudicate veterans' preference.
- Evidence of citizenship

STEP RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION REQUIREMENTS

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES. HR offices with delegated HR authority must establish internal standard operating procedures outlining the specific functions and designated roles and responsibilities that govern at a minimum: job advertisement, application process, and referral and selection under an STEP appointment. The document should also incorporate how workforce integration strategies will be used to effectively identify occupations targeted for STEP.

RECRUITMENT/STAFFING AND CLASSIFICATION. Although there isn't a requirement to advertise STEP positions via public notice, The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer requires that all STEP positions be advertised broadly and/or in targeted recruitment campaigns in an effort to uphold fair and open competition (merit system principles).

The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer requires that a STEP position be advertised for no less than 3 days. The servicing HR office may advertise STEP job opportunities using the internet, print media, radio, or television in combination with their broad-based and/or targeted recruitment plan. Recruitment strategies and rating and ranking systems (ensuring adjudication of veterans' preference) must be documented.

Records for each STEP appointment must be maintained for a minimum of three years. Each STEP hiring action should document the following items:

- Recruitment Plan
- List of applicants for the position
- Referral list including adjudicated veterans' preference
- Selection criteria for the position

All personnel actions related to an STEP appointment should incorporate the mandatory statements and authorization codes as set forth in the OPM Guide to Processing Personnel Actions (<http://www.opm.gov/feddata/gppa/gppa.asp> in Chapter 11).

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

Appropriate appointment citations are as follows:

| <i>R U L E</i> | <i>If the person</i> | <i>And the appointment</i> | <i>And the person</i> | <i>Then NOAC is</i> | <i>NOA is</i> | <i>Auth code is</i> | <i>And Authority is (See Notes 1-4 of this table)</i> |
|----------------------------|---|---|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|---|
| 16 | Is a student in a post-high school certificate or diploma program (e.g., a vocational or technical certificate program) | Is under the Student Temporary Employment Program of the Student Educational Employment Program | Is not on your agency's rolls | 171 | Exc Appt NTE (date) | Y2K | Sch B, 213.3202(a)-V oc/Tech |
| 17 | | | Is already on the rolls of your agency | 571 | Conv to Exc Appt NTE (date) | | |
| 18 | Is a student in an associate degree program | | Is not on your agency's rolls | 171 | Exc Appt NTE (date) | Y3K | Sch B, 213.3202(a)-Assoc |
| 19 | | | Is already on the rolls of your agency | 571 | Conv to Exc Appt NTE (date) | | |
| 20 | Is a student in a baccalaureate degree program | | Is not on your agency's rolls | 171 | Exc Appt NTE (date) | Y4K | Sch B, 213.3202(a)-BA/BS |
| 21 | | | Is already on the rolls of your agency | 571 | Conv to Exc Appt NTE (date) | | |
| 22 | Is a student in a graduate or professional degree program | | Is not on your agency's rolls | 171 | Exc Appt NTE (date) | Y5K | Sch B, 213.3202(a)-Grad/Prof |
| 23 | | | Is already on the rolls of your agency | 571 | Conv to Exc Appt NTE (date) | | |

* Remarks to be shown on the SF-50 (Appointment Limitations):

- The Remark Code A30 – This appointment does not confer eligibility to be non-competitively converted to career conditional or career appointment.

WRITTEN TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS. Written tests, including the Administrative Careers with America (ACWA) Exams, are not required.

RATING AND RANKING. Although rating and ranking applicants under the Excepted Service is exempt, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer requires that each HR office apply either a numerical rating or category rating system in order to justify selections and defend hiring decisions. Participants may be rated and ranked according to one or more of the following qualitative factors, such as: Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities; Competency assessment; behavioral interviews; or a combination of assessment tools. Procedures must be documented and applied consistently to avoid any appearance of impropriety.

VETERANS' PREFERENCE. During the rating and finalist notification process, the local servicing HR office must ensure that interviews and selections adhere to veterans' preference order. Depending on the veterans' preference category on the referral list, the same process and procedures that are used in the competitive service apply when deciding who to interview and select.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

The decision under *Gingery v. Department of Defense*, 550 F.3d. 1347 (Fed.Cir. 2008) issued by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit invalidated an OPM regulation dealing with veterans' preference, since the regulation provided less protection than what was provided for in Federal statute. Since the STEP is an excepted service appointment, the Court ruled that selection into the excepted service must be conducted in the same manner and under the same conditions as required for the competitive service. As a result, 5 CFR 302.401(b) under the excepted service was ruled invalid. Therefore, to adjudicate veterans' preference under a STEP appointment, the HR office must apply the same procedures as used under the competitive process when assessing veterans' preference. Staff should refer to OPM's Vet Guide for additional information: (<http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp#2Ajudicat>).

Therefore, to adjudicate veteran's preference under a STEP appointment, the HR office must apply the same procedures as used under the competitive process when assessing veterans' preference. Staff should refer to the Vet Guide for additional information; (<http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp#2Ajudicat>).

It is important to note that for 30% or more compensable veterans, the HR office must obtain permission for pass over from OPM while simultaneously notifying the Office of the Strategic Planning and Policy, Policy Division (HC-11) of this course of action. While requesting OPM's approval, the HR office must notify the preference eligible of the proposed pass over of the reasons thereof, and his/her right to respond.

- This notification must be sent in a timely manner to the preference eligible's last known address.

Managers should consult with their servicing HR office for questions regarding the adjudication process.

VETERAN PASS OVER. If a Finalist is preference eligible and they express an interest in working for an agency, the application must be considered. For purposes of this desktop reference, "express an interest" means that the applicants has initiated contact with the agency in person or by other direct communication (i.e. telephone, email, formal letter) and asked for consideration. The types of contact can include dropping off a résumé at a job fair, sending a résumé by mail/email, delivering a résumé in person to a manager, supervisor, or HR office that is considering an appointment.

If the selecting official decides not to hire the preference eligible or the preference eligible who expressed interest in a particular position, then a written justification must be submitted to the servicing HR office as to why the preference eligible did not meet the criteria for the position. The type of veteran will determine the course of action in terms of notification. Staff should refer to OPM's Vet Guide for additional information; (<http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp#2Ajudicat>).

In general, a written justification accomplishes two objectives. A preference eligible is entitled, upon request, to obtain a copy of the reasons he or she was passed over in favor of a non-preference eligible. Secondly, if the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) officials audit the agency's corporate internship programs process, the written justification serves as documentation that preference eligibles who were part of the agency applicant pool received proper consideration.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

CASE FILE MANAGEMENT. STEP appointments require documentation of the hiring process. Only HR Offices with delegated HR authority are authorized to make STEP appointments. Basic HR functions such as classification, adjudicating veterans' preference, establishing and issuing referral lists, and tentative and formal job offers are functions that must be performed by the servicing HR Office. These functions cannot be re-delegated to management.

All STEP personnel actions must include the mandatory statements and authorization codes as set forth in the OPM Guide to Processing Personnel Actions. For a copy of this document, visit the following website: <http://www.opm.gov/feddata/gppa/gppa.asp> and review Chapter 11. Additionally, a STEP checklist is provided in Appendix A. Offices are not mandated to use these forms if one has already been established. The checklists serve as guidance only and do not preclude the requirements set forth under the CFR.

STEP EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

STUDENT VERIFICATION. Each semester, trimester, or quarter (depending on the academic institution's schedule) after the initial appointment, the Corporate Intern Coordinator must obtain verification from the student, as outlined in the STEP Appointment Documentation section below, to document that the student is still enrolled and continues to meet eligibility requirements.

PAY ADMINISTRATION AND BENEFITS

WORK SCHEDULES. Program participants may work full-time or part-time up to 40 hours per week. There are no limitations on the number of hours a student can work per week; however, the work schedule cannot interfere with the student's academic schedule. With supervisory approval, schedules for students working full-time may be flexible or compressed.

Work hours and work projects should not interfere with the participant's educational responsibilities. An intermittent schedule is appropriate only when the nature of the work is so sporadic and unpredictable that a regularly scheduled tour of duty cannot be scheduled in advance. In establishing the STEP, OPM did not intend to have program participants working on intermittent schedules; therefore, students should be placed on either a part-time or full-time schedule.

PAY. Students in the STEP must be paid according to the criteria set forth in the appropriate general schedule or wage grade classification standard for the job. See 5 CFR 213.3202(a)(11). Typically a STEP participant will be employed at Step 1 of the grade level for which they qualify based on a combination of education attainment and relevant work experience. If you are setting pay based solely on education, you can use Appendix A as a reference to set pay via the General Schedule ([click here](#) to view Appendix A).

STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT/RECRUITMENT INCENTIVES. STEP participants are eligible to receive recruitment incentives as long as the appointment is greater than 6 months (5 CFR 575.110(a)). The

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer recommends that recruitment incentives be used to hire individuals whose appointment is not temporary in nature. If one of the recruitment incentives listed above is to be utilized, a written justification must be submitted to the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13) in the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy.

STEP participants are not eligible for student loan repayments since a STEP is a time-limited appointment that does not lead to a conversion to a permanent appointment.

ADVANCED PAY RATE. Although a STEP appointee is eligible to receive an advance-in-hire to a higher step within the grade level, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer discourages its use for student programs like SCEP or the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) due to the fact that there is not a rating and ranking system that can be fairly applied across all disciplines for student programs to justify advances in pay.

ANNUAL AND SICK LEAVE. Students in the STEP are eligible to accrue annual and sick leave (5 CFR 213.3202(a)(13)(i)).

FEDERAL BENEFITS. Participants in the STEP are typically not eligible to receive health care benefits, life insurance benefits, retirement benefits, or Thrift Savings Plan participation due to the fact that their appointments are to be limited to no longer than six months.

A STEP participant may be eligible to participate in the health care program if they are expected to be appointed continuously for longer than 1 year (5 CFR 890.102(c)(1)). If a STEP participant elects to receive health benefits, the employee must pay 100 percent (both the employee and government contribution) for the health care plan coverage (see 5 CFR 890.501(f)).

A STEP participant may also be eligible to contribute to their retirement if they are employed continuously for longer than 1 year (5 CFR 831.201(a)(1)).

There is no provision for a temporary employee to receive life insurance benefits.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

TRAINING. STEP participants are eligible to attend training courses and have any training related travel reimbursed in relation to such training. Due to the temporary nature of their appointment, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer encourages that tuition remission for attending collegiate courses be limited to special employment program participants in SCEP, FCIP, and PMF.

In the event that a program office wants to offer tuition reimbursement to a STEP participant, the program office should follow the guidance set forth in DOE Order 360.1-1B, the Federal Employee Training Manual. At a minimum, program offices should ensure that the coursework is directly related to the occupation as well as the overall mission and function of the office. Additionally, the program

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

office should seek to structure a continuing service agreement in alignment with DOE Order 360.1-1B. All training should be tracked via an Individual Development Plan.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

PERFORMANCE. Managers are encouraged to develop performance standards for STEP participants, particularly if there is a possibility that the individual may be non-competitively converted to the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP). In the event that the STEP appointment does not to exceed 1 year, a manager does maintain the flexibility not to develop performance standards in accordance with 5 CFR 430.202. However, the STEP participant must also agree not to have their performance appraised. A manager must demonstrate that the STEP participant had their rights explained to them and willingly chose to forgo their right to a performance plan. If the STEP appointment exceeds 1 year, managers are required to develop a performance plan in accordance with 5 CFR 430.202 and must follow the procedures set forth in the current DOE performance management system.

WITHIN-GRADE-INCREASES. STEP participants' eligibility for within-grade increases is dependent upon the pay plan in which the participant was appointed. Temporary employees who maintain an occupation in the Wage Grade (WG) pay plan are eligible for within-grade increases. Temporary employees appointed to an occupation in the GS pay plan are not eligible for within-grade increases.

PROMOTIONS. STEP participants are eligible for promotion. Time-in-grade restrictions do not apply, but participants must meet the qualifications through a combination of education, experience, or training for the next highest grade level. Typically, training plans are not created for STEP due to the temporary nature of their appointment. However, if an individual is on an extended STEP assignment (1 year or more) it is in the manager's best interest to establish an Individual Development Plan (IDP) or training plan for the STEP participant.

Promotions under the STEP program are categorized as re-appointment actions to the next highest grade level. Reappointment to the next highest grade level is typically as a result of completing additional education which qualifies the participant for the next grade level. To see the corresponding grade level regarding educational attainment, review [Appendix A](#) at the end of this reference book.

JUSTIFYING PROMOTIONS. Depending on the situation and appointment, the following documentation maybe required to justify a STEP promotion:

- Updated transcript showcasing additional educational attainment (required)
- IDP with completed required training for promotion to the (optional, but may be necessary)
- Performance appraisal (optional, but may be necessary)
- Written justification based on identified critical performance elements (optional, but may be necessary). To see justification sample document, review [Appendix C](#).

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

AWARDS. STEP participants must have an established performance plan to be eligible to receive performance or non-performance-based awards.

NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS. There is no limit on the number of times a student may be appointed as long as they meet the eligibility requirements for each appointment. A previous STEP participant may be non-competitively reappointed to another STEP appointment.

OTHER CONDITIONS

ESTABLISHING ASSIGNMENTS. Before students begin their employment, the manager or supervisor should plan and establish structured work assignments. The purpose of the program is to provide the student with on-the-job experience and for the student to contribute to the mission and vision of DOE. By providing structured, meaningful programs, students can be an important component of marketing DOE's special employment programs in the future.

SEPARATION OR TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT. The local servicing HR office must be informed of any proposed action to separate a student on account of performance or conduct. An appointment may be terminated at any time for the following reasons:

1. Resignation
2. Suspension, expulsion, or withdrawal from his or her educational institution
3. Unsatisfactory work performance or conduct (must be properly documented)
4. Failure to maintain academic standards
5. Inability of the program office to retain the student in the position; e.g., budget constraints, reduction-in-force, etc.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD. Participants in the STEP do not serve a probationary period. If a STEP is converted to the SCEP or appointed to an FCIP or PMF position, the time served in the STEP program cannot be applied to the probationary period required under a career or career-conditional appointment (5 CFR 315.802).

REDUCTION IN FORCE (RIF). As a temporary employee, the student has no vested right to remain employed and has no mandatory right to be non-competitively converted to a competitive service position.

KEY DEFINITIONS

Accredited. An accredited institution or program is a secondary or post-secondary institution or program that is legally authorized to offer academic programs that lead to a diploma, certificate, or degree and is formally recognized by an accrediting agency listed as nationally recognized by the Secretary of Education. Accreditation can be verified at: <http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Index.aspx>.

Break in Program. A break in program is defined as a period of time when a program participant is on a leave without pay status during the course of attempting to complete a FCIP, PMF, or SCEP appointment. The participant may be working but unable to go to school, may be attending classes but unable to work, or may not be working or attending class.

Excepted Service. Appointments in the Federal Government that have been excepted from certain competitive service rules and regulations.

Student. A student as defined in this policy is an individual who has been accepted for enrollment or who is enrolled and seeking an accredited degree pursuing any of the following educational programs that have been accredited by an accrediting body recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education: High school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma; Vocational/Technical certificate; Associate Degree; Baccalaureate Degree; Graduate Degree; or Professional Degree.

Half-time Enrollment. The definition of half-time enrollment as defined by OPM is enrollment in at least 6 credit hours per semester or the equivalent as defined by the school's Registrar's Office. An individual who needs to complete less than the equivalent of half-time enrollment as defined in this section for the semester in which graduation occurs is still considered a student for purposes of this program.

Exhibits - CHECKLIST DESCRIPTIONS

PURPOSE. To ensure consistency and standardization in the processing of personnel actions on employees who are hired through one of the special employment programs under the corporate intern programs framework, the following checklists should be filed in the case file. These four checklists were developed to aid Specialists in the processing of FCIP, PMF, SCEP, and STEP actions. The information contained in the checklists is based on the guidance in 5 CFR 213.3202 and 5 CFR 362. The checklists are to be used to supplement CFR guidance, not as a replacement for that guidance.

APPLICABILITY. HR Offices with delegated authority.

PROCEDURES: Refer to the appropriate checklist when processing appointment, promotion or conversion actions for FCIP, PMF, SCEP, or STEP employees.

The checklists must be maintained in the case file. If the HR Office uses another checklist for these types of actions, those forms must be modified to ensure basic requirements are incorporated.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

EXHIBIT 1 - FEDERAL CAREER INTERN PROGRAM (FCIP) CHECKLIST

| APPOINTMENTS | REMARKS |
|---|----------------|
| Current résumé | |
| Current transcripts | |
| Signed formal Individual Development Plan (IDP) | |
| Recruitment/Relocation Incentive documents (if applicable, service agreement and justification) | |
| Student loan repayment documents (if applicable, service agreement and justification) | |
| Advance In-hire documentation (if applicable) | |
| Applicable SF-50 remarks | |
| Clear RPL and annotate Part D of SF-52 | |
| Vet Preference IS applied for FCIP (see CFR 302 for further guidance) | |
| Excepted Service Appointment may not exceed 2 years (Do not use a NTE NOA) | |
| Appointment may be extended up to 1 additional year with OPM's Approval | |
| Initial appointment must be at grade 5, 7, or 9 (or the equivalent) | |
| Must meet OPM Qualification Standards | |
| If this position is covered by ACWA, contact HC Policy (HC-11) for guidance | |
| Use appropriate pay rate determinant for advance in-hire appointments that have a special salary rate (if applicable) | |
| PROMOTIONS | |
| Must meet OPM Qualification Standard | |
| Accelerated Promotion documentation (if applicable) | |
| Use YCM Authority Code while in excepted service | |
| Input appropriate SPEP codes when employee completes the intern program | |
| RPL exception annotated in Part D of RPA | |
| Applicable Guide to Processing Personnel Actions (GPPA) remarks | |
| CONVERSION TO COMPETITIVE SERVICE | |
| Follow the GPPA | |
| RPL exception annotated in Part D of RPA | |
| Input appropriate SPEP codes (if applicable) | |
| Service counts toward career tenure | |
| Effective date must be at the end of the initial 2-year appointment | |
| Applicable GPPA remarks | |

**All documentation must be approved & available prior to the effective date of the action (e.g. advance in hire memo). This checklist supplements 5 CFR 213.3202 and is not to be considered a substitute for that guidance.*

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

EXHIBIT 2 - PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT FELLOWS (PMF) PROGRAM CHECKLIST

| APPOINTMENTS | REMARKS |
|---|---------|
| Current résumé | |
| Current transcripts | |
| Signed formal Individual Development Plan (IDP) | |
| Recruitment Bonus documentation (if applicable – service agreement and justification) | |
| Student loan repayment documentation (if applicable – service agreement and justification) | |
| Recruitment Bonus documentation (if applicable) | |
| Advance In-hire documentation (if applicable) | |
| Applicable SF-50 remarks | |
| Clear RPL and annotate Part D of SF-52 | |
| Vet Preference IS applied for PMF (see CFR 302 for further guidance) | |
| Excepted Service Appointment may not exceed 2 years (Do not use a NTE NOA) | |
| Appointment may be extended up to 1 additional year with OPM's approval | |
| Initial appointment must be at grade 9, 11, 12 (or the equivalent) | |
| Must meet OPM Qualification Standards | |
| Use appropriate pay rate determinant for advance in-hire appointments that have a special salary rate | |
| PROMOTIONS | |
| Must meet OPM Qualification Standard | |
| Accelerated Promotion documentation (if applicable) | |
| Use corresponding Authority Code while in excepted service | |
| Input appropriate SPEP codes when employee completes the program | |
| RPL exception annotated in Part D of SF-52 | |
| Applicable GPPA remarks | |
| CONVERSION TO COMPETITIVE SERVICE | |
| Follow the Guide to Processing Personnel Actions (GPPA) | |
| RPL exception annotated in Part D of SF-52 | |
| Input appropriate SPEP codes (if applicable) | |
| Service counts toward career tenure | |
| Effective date must be at the end of the initial 2-year appointment | |
| Applicable GPPA remarks | |

**All documentation must be approved & available prior to the effective date of the action (e.g. advance in hire memo). This checklist supplements 5 CFR 362 and is not to be considered a substitute for that guidance.*

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

EXHIBIT 3 - STUDENT CAREER EXPERIENCE PROGRAM (SCEP) CHECKLIST

| APPOINTMENTS | REMARKS |
|--|---------|
| Must meet definition of student | |
| Current résumé | |
| Current transcripts | |
| Must meet OPM qualifications for SCEP appt | |
| Work experience relates to academic/career goals | |
| Student/School/Agency Agreement (signed) | |
| Clear RPL and annotate Part D of SF-52 | |
| SF-50 Remark | |
| Job description should contain "99" as the last 2 digits (e.g. 899 for engineering SCEP students) | |
| PROMOTIONS | |
| Must meet definition of student | |
| Current transcripts | |
| Must meet OPM Qualifications Standard | |
| SPEP coding (if applicable) | |
| Applicable SF-50 remarks | |
| RPL exception annotated in Part D of SF-52 | |
| CONVERSION TO COMPETITIVE SERVICE | |
| Transcript showing degree conferred | |
| Meets OPM Qualifications for the position | |
| Conversion within 120 days of graduation | |
| Completed 640 hours of work experience | |
| Use appropriate pay rate determinant for advanced in-hire appointments that have a special salary rate | |
| Academic training related to position & career related work Experience | |
| Advance in-hire documentation (if applicable) | |
| RPL exception annotated in Part D of RPA | |
| Applicable SF-50 Remarks | |
| Service in a SCEP position counts toward career tenure | |
| One year probationary period required (see CFR 315.801) | |

**All documentation must be approved & available prior to the effective date of the action (e.g. student/school/agency agreement). This checklist supplements 5 CFR 213.3202 and is not to be considered a substitute for that guidance.*

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

EXHIBIT 4 - STUDENT TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (STEP) CHECKLIST

| APPOINTMENTS | | REMARKS |
|---|--|----------------|
| Must meet definition of student | | |
| Current résumé | | |
| Current transcripts (or verified enrollment letter) | | |
| Required Remarks on the SF-50 | | |
| Appointment is NTE 1-year or less; may be extended in 1-year or less increments | | |
| RPL exception annotated on the SF-52 | | |
| Must meet OPM Qualifications Standard | | |
| Current STEP school certification form/working agreement (if applicable) | | |
| PROMOTIONS | | |
| Must meet definition of student | | |
| Current résumé | | |
| Must meet OPM Qualifications Standard | | |
| Process as conversion to appt NTE | | |
| Appropriate Remarks on the SF-50 | | |
| RPL exception annotated in Part D of SF-52 | | |
| Current transcripts | | |
| Current STEP school certification form (if applicable) | | |
| CONVERSION TO SCEP APPOINTMENT | | |
| Must meet the definition of student | | |
| Must meet SCEP appointment requirements | | |
| SF-50 Remark | | |
| Clear RPL & annotate Part D of SF-52 | | |
| Student/School/Agency signed agreement | | |

**All documentation must be approved & available prior to the effective date of the action (e.g. transcripts). This checklist supplements 5 CFR 213.3202 and is not to be considered a substitute for that guidance.*

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

EXHIBIT 5 - MOBILITY AGREEMENT

I understand that mobility is a requirement for participation in the Department of Energy Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP) or Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program. Therefore, I agree to move to a location within the _____ (name of program/field office) complex at the end of my developmental/training period. In addition, during this training period, I agree to participate in a developmental assignment, which may take place outside of my commuting area and may last 30 days or more. I understand that failure to abide by this Mobility Agreement may result in an action to terminate my employment with the Department of Energy.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

CC: Mentor
Corporate Intern Coordinator (HR Office)
Field/Program Office
Supervisor

APPENDIX A – Education to Grade Level Conversion Chart

To further assist you in determining the grade levels for which a current student, high school graduate, or college graduate is eligible when utilizing one of the CCIS employment programs, please see the chart shown below. This chart can be used as a guide when considering educational attainment only.

An individual may be eligible for a higher grade when considering job experience in addition to education attainment. For a formal determination, managers should contact their servicing Human Capital Specialist in their local HR Operations Office.

Education to Grade-Level Conversion Chart

| Educational Attainment | Grade Level |
|--|-------------|
| High School student | GS-1 |
| High School graduate | GS-2 |
| Completed at least 1 year of undergraduate study (30 semester hours or academic institution equivalent) | GS-3 |
| Completed at least 2 years of undergraduate study (60 semester hours or academic institution equivalent) | GS-4 |
| Completed Bachelor's Degree | GS-5 |
| Completed Bachelor's Degree with at least a 2.95 GPA | GS-7 |
| Completed 1 year of graduate study (at least 18 credits) | GS-7 |
| Completed 2 years of graduate study (at least 36 credits) or completed law school | GS-9 |
| Completed 3 years of graduate study (at least 54 credits) or completed doctorate degree | GS-11 |

APPENDIX B – SCEP Working Agreement

Student Career Experience Program Working Agreement

Before beginning employment with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), all participants in the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) must read, understand, and sign the following agreement with the attached addendums.

U.S. Department of the Energy
(fill in sub-office name)

THIS IS AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY,

_____, and
(Name of Educational Institution)

_____, in an effort to understand and agree to the following:
(Name of Student/Employee)

This agreement establishes the basis for a mutual understanding and respective responsibilities between the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), _____ (educational institution), and the program participant, _____, prior to employment as a SCEP participant within DOE. The SCEP is a planned, progressive educational program that provides for the integration of a student's academic studies and Federal work experience with the potential for non-competitive conversion into the Federal career service. It is consistent with guidance contained in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 5, Volume 1, Parts 213 and 338; and the DOE policies.

Student Eligibility Requirements

- At least 16 years old.
- U.S. citizen or national (resident of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, Swains Island or other U.S. territory).
 - NOTE: Non-citizens may be appointed to the Student Career Experience Program provided that:
 - a) The student is lawfully admitted to the United States as a permanent resident or otherwise authorized to be employed.
 - b) The agency is authorized to pay aliens under the annual appropriations act and any agency specific enabling and appropriation statutes.
 - c) All students in the Student Career Experience Program must be U. S. citizens at the time they are non-competitively converted to a career conditional appointment, otherwise the student's employment will be terminated.

Student Eligibility Requirements (continued)

- Meet the DOE policy on nepotism.
- Meet personnel suitability and physical requirements.
- At least a half-time student.
- Meet the qualification standards of the position.
- In good academic standing (see performance appraisal below).

Student Selection

DOE may appoint students who:

- Are in good academic standing.
- Meet qualification standards of the position.
- Are former participants in other student hiring programs as a contractor or as a participant in the Student Temporary Employment Program who is awaiting conversion to the SCEP.
- Are recommended by institution staff for participation in the program

A SCEP participant is appointed on a Schedule B 213.3202(b) appointment into the excepted service. The SCEP appointment may not extend beyond 120 days after the participant has satisfactorily completed their educational degree requirements. This means that the 120 days begins not on the graduation ceremony day, but upon the completion of the academic requirements for the degree.

Full consideration will be given to all qualified applicants without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or affiliation with an employee organization. Veterans who have been honorably discharged from the armed forces should also be eligible for full consideration if they meet program requirements.

Class Attendance

SCEP participants must major in a discipline related to the work series they are placed in at the time of appointment. The SCEP participant must attend class regularly. If the participant is receiving a benefit from DOE (i.e. tuition remission/reimbursement, etc) in exchange for attending class, the class room is considered to be one of the duty stations for participant. SCEP participants will not be in a pay status while attending class.

Participants who fail to attend class or have more than 6 unexcused absences in a semester are at risk of termination from participation in the SCEP. DOE officials retain the right to ask for attendance records from college or university personnel or develop a tracking mechanism for attendance. These records are maintained in an effort to ensure the participant is abiding by the program rules set forth in this document and the addendums.

Class Standing

A student must maintain in good standing with the academic institution and maintain the grade point average (GPA) within the DOE requirements for the SCEP. Participants in the department's SCEP program must maintain a minimum 2.5 overall GPA (or rounded up from 2.45). Program offices within DOE retain the right to require a higher GPA not to exceed a 3.0 overall average (or rounded up from 2.95) in an effort towards the successful accomplishment of their organization's mission. Failure to maintain the minimum GPA can result in termination from the program.

A student may request a performance improvement plan for the period of 1 semester in order to avoid termination and establish a GPA in accordance with the minimum level required for this program.

Pay and Benefits

Students are paid in accordance with established pay schedules. Benefits for which students may be eligible include:

- Retirement (participation is mandatory)
- Life insurance
- Health insurance (The Federal contribution for health insurance will be prorated based on the number of hours they student works. The student is responsible for the balance of the premiums, which will be deducted from their pay check).
 - NOTE: Health insurance contributions from the Federal Government will only be made so long as the incoming employee is a SCEP participant for 1 year.
- Annual Leave and Sick Leave (Leave accrual is prorated based on the number of hours the student works in a given pay period (two weeks) and their years of service).
 - NOTE: Participants earn sick leave at the rate of 4 hours per pay period (every two weeks) for full time employment or 1 hour per pay period for every 20 hours of work. A student earns annual leave at the rate authorized for their length of Federal service, and is also prorated based on their work schedule.
- Holiday leave
- Tuition assistance
 - NOTE: If the participant accepts tuition assistance, the individual must sign and abide by the terms of a separate service agreement
- Alternative work schedules and telework/flexiplace participation
- Payment of travel for the purpose of work or for training
- Transportation expenses (i.e. vanpool, carpool, bus, subway, etc)

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

Work Schedules

Participant schedules may be part-time (a schedule of 16 to 32 hours a week) or full-time (40 hours a week). Special consideration may be made to allow a student to work less than 16 hours per week in an effort to ensure program participation does not interfere with their academic responsibilities. Work experience(s) for the SCEP participants must be planned by their managers, be consistent with the student's academic studies and career goals, and be designed to meet the minimum requirement of the 640 work hours needed for conversion to a permanent appointment in the Federal Government upon completion of the degree.

Performance

The incumbent will receive close supervision from higher-graded staff that will provide work assignments with specific instructions, including sources of information, techniques to be used, results expected, and timeframes for completion of work. During the assignment, a higher-graded professional staff member will be available for consultation, guidance, further instruction, and appraisal of performance.

Performance appraisals are required to be consistent with the DOE performance appraisal system, and results should be shared with the school. If a participant's academic performance in any semester falls below the educational institution's definition of good academic standing or below a 2.0 GPA (or rounded up from 1.95), the participant's employment may be terminated even if the participant maintains the overall minimum GPA required for participation in this program.

Additionally, if the participant's performance on the job falls below the level of "Meets Expectations" under the DOE performance appraisal system, a participant can be terminated from continuing in the SCEP program. If the participant is taking the SCEP for college credit, the university will be notified by the DOE SCEP coordinator of the student's failure to meet performance expectations.

Promotion

Participants in the SCEP may be promoted to higher-graded trainee positions based on their Federal Government student trainee work experience, education completion, or the DOE promotion policy for participants in the excepted service. Promotion from one grade to another is at the discretion of the agency and is contingent upon the student meeting the performance requirements of the agency and the individual development plan created to demonstrate coursework, training, and experience needed to meet the competency and skill levels for each grade level.

Employment after Completion of Program Requirements

The SCEP appointment is intended to continue through completion of education and study-related work requirements. DOE may non-competitively appoint the participant to a career, career-conditional, or term appointment within 120 days after satisfactory completion of their academic program.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

All 640 hours of career-related work experience must be achieved prior to, or concurrent with, the completion of the participant's degree requirements, not the day of the graduation ceremony. The entry level grade to be offered will be based on OPM qualifications standards. The full performance level will be determined based on job series.

Should DOE make an offer of permanent employment for a position that requires a security clearance, the offer of permanent employment will be contingent upon the participant's ability to obtain a clearance. Student trainees disqualified from continuing in the program or not converted to a career, career-conditional, or term appointment, will have their appointment terminated.

Termination

A participant's appointment in the SCEP may be terminated at any time for any of the following:

1. Resignation.
2. Change to a field of study that will not qualify the student for a career position in the department.
3. Suspension, expulsion, or withdrawal from the educational institution.
4. Failure to maintain academic standards set forth in this agreement.
5. Failure to abide by agency suitability or security requirements
6. Medical emergency or disability that does not allow the participant to maintain their status as a student
7. Administrative reasons (e.g., budget constraints, lack of work, misconduct);
8. Unsatisfactory performance.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role of U.S. Department of Energy

1. Appoint a DOE SCEP Manager and designate additional staff members as needed to maintain liaison with the qualifying educational institution.
2. Inform school of work experience opportunities and provide adequate job descriptions promptly.
3. Select appointees referred by schools in accordance with EEO principles without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, disability status, or status as a veteran of the armed forces.
4. Orient the student to DOE's mission, policies, and procedures.
5. Establish work schedules consistent with the school's academic calendar that enable students to complete the SCEP program.
6. Provide quality work assignments related to the student's academic studies or career goals where they can learn and be productive. Provide progressive and diversified experiences through formal classroom training or on-the-job development to prepare program participants for the occupation in which they have an interest.
7. Conduct appraisals and counsel participants regarding their performance and development.
8. Complete necessary forms and share progress reports with the participant's academic advisor, dean, or appointed institution official.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

9. Process all personnel actions and keep necessary records related to student employment.
10. Notify schools of any change in a SCEP student's status.

Role of (fill in educational institution)

1. Designate a representative to work with the DOE SCEP Program Manager and/or other agency officials regarding the information.
2. Inform eligible students of the DOE's SCEP opportunities, in an effort to identify potential future employees and strengthen the relationship between the school and our agency.
3. Refer interested and qualified candidates to DOE without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, disability, this includes allowing the participation of veterans discharged from the armed forces under honorable conditions.
4. Correlate studies in a manner that will expand both the participant's vocational and educational development.
5. Furnish DOE with requested information related to participant's field of study, academic standing; and/or class attendance records.
6. Monitor academic progress upon DOE or student request from instructors.
7. Inform DOE of any change in a SCEP participant's status, including reports on a student's progress and performance upon request.

The Participant's Role

1. Submit official course registration for the upcoming semester and an official transcript covering past course work to the DOE's SCEP Program Manager every semester or quarter term. Official documentation must be received for each semester or quarter term for you to maintain eligibility for continued employment in the program.
2. Adhere to the DOE's work schedule, if a change in work schedule is desire, you must submit a request for a tour of duty change in writing to the supervisor.
3. Assume personal and professional responsibilities for your own actions and activities.
4. Use a courteous, enthusiastic, and professional approach to policies and procedures within the occupation and organization.
5. Meet academic, performance, and conduct standards set forth by the school and DOE.
6. Provide DOE and school coordinators with periodic progress reports on the quality of work and study assignments.
7. To work effectively with peers and supervisors.
8. To notify the school or DOE of any change in your academic status.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

Conditions of the Agreement

This agreement conforms to all current Federal regulations. Regulations are subject to change by Legislation, Executive Order, Office of Personnel Management, or Departmental policy. Changes which are not required by new laws or regulations will occur only by mutual consent of the agency, the institution, and the participant by written amendment to this agreement and/or its addendums. This agreement becomes effective when signed by all parties.

The following parties agree to the terms and conditions contained in this participation agreement and all of the following addendums:

(Student's Signature)

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Date

(Signature of Authorized School Official)

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Date

(DOE Supervisor & Contact Info)

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Date

SCEP Program Manager

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Date

APPENDIX C – Promotion Justification

TO: (Name of HR Specialist)
Office of Human Capital Management

FROM: Manager Name
Manager Title
Name of Office

SUBJECT: Promotion for (Name of Employee)

(Name of Employee) served as a (Position title) in the Name of specific organization (CF-??) under my supervision. His performance was superior, with (Name of Employee) performing well above standards expected for employees at the GS-?? level, to which s/he received a promotion/or was appointed to on (appointment/promotion date). Based on his or her training and developmental experiences, he or she met the standards for the GS-?? level. The below information provides evidence of this performance, as it relates to his/her major job elements:

Major Job Elements for: *Name of Employee*

- Include Job Element 1
 - Evidence of surpassing expectations:
 - Subpoint 1, 2, 3, etc. Be sure to include training and/or experiential performance requirements for each grade level. An IDP can be added as supporting documentation. Recommend setting up and tracking completion through the CHRIS system.
- Include Job Element 2
 - Evidence of surpassing expectations:
 - Subpoint 1, 2, 3, etc. Be sure to include training and/or experiential performance requirements for each grade level. An IDP can be added as supporting documentation. Recommend setting up and tracking completion through the CHRIS system.
- Include Job Element 3
 - Evidence of surpassing expectations:
 - Subpoint 1, 2, 3, etc. Be sure to include training and/or experiential performance requirements for each grade level. An IDP can be added as supporting documentation. Recommend setting up and tracking completion through the CHRIS system.

- Include Job Element 4
 - Evidence of surpassing expectations:
 - Subpoint 1, 2, 3, etc. Be sure to include training and/or experiential performance requirements for each grade level. An IDP can be added as supporting documentation. Recommend setting up and tracking completion through the CHRIS system.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

APPENDIX D – INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FORM

[illegible]

For the Word document, please contact the Employment Solutions Division (HC-13).

APPENDIX E

QUARTERLY REPORT

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PARTICIPANT:

MENTOR:

ORGANIZATION:

REPORT PERIOD COVERED:

DATE SUBMITTED:

PART 1

PARTICIPATION

1. Describe the major significant Federal Career Intern Program activities (e.g. courses attended, developmental assignments, special projects undertaken, etc.) that you accomplished during the past 3 months. Describe how effective each activity was.

2. List any leadership development self-study activities completed (e.g. books read, audio tapes used, etc.).

3. Did you achieve the objectives for this reporting period that were initially described in your individual development plan? Explain any modifications to or deviations from that plan.

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

4. List any leadership skills or major knowledge that you developed as a result of the Federal Career Intern Program activities during this reporting period.

5. What specific leadership skills and organizational knowledge (not already addressed in your Individual Development Plan) do you think need additional emphasis?

6. Describe any problems (and the causes) that you encountered while trying to accomplish your planned Federal Career Intern Program activities.

7. Other comments.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT: _____

DATE: _____

CC: Mentor
DOE FCIP Program Manager
Corporate Intern Coordinator (HR Office)
Field/Program Office
Supervisor

PART 2

MENTOR COMMENTS

1. Observations about the participant's program progress and skill development in relation to the Individual Development Plan.

2. Suggestions for additional activities to add to the Individual Development Plan that would benefit the participant or the skills that may require additional development.

3. Other comments.

SIGNATURE OF MENTOR: _____

DATE: _____

CC: Mentor
DOE FCIP Program Manager
Corporate Intern Coordinator
Field/Program Office
Supervisor

PART 3 DETAIL/ROTATIONAL SUPERVISOR COMMENTS

1. Observations about the participant's program progress and skill development against Individual Development Plan.

2. Suggestions for additional activities to add to the Individual Development Plan that would benefit the participant or the skills that may require additional development.

3. Other comments.

SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISOR: _____

DATE: _____

CC: Mentor
DOE FCIP Program Manager
Corporate Intern Coordinator
Field/Program Office
Supervisor

APPENDIX F

FCIP PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

I hereby agree to participate for a period not to exceed two years in the Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP), as authorized by Executive Order 13162, and 5 C.F.R. 213.3202(o), and I agree to:

1. Accept and satisfactorily complete On-the-Job (OJT) and formal/informal training assignments
2. Maintain a high level of work performance in rotational and host assignments
3. Maintain academic standards for approved coursework, as appropriate and prepare course and program evaluations as requested
4. Ensure that I report for work as set forward in my mutually agreed upon work schedule with my supervisor
5. Agree to work with my mentor to ensure I reach my desired career development
6. Prepare evaluations for my mentor, supervisor(s), and program as requested

I understand my 2 years appointed to the FCIP program does not confer any right to further Federal employment in either the competitive or excepted service upon expiration of the internship period, except for an employee who held a career or career conditional position in an agency immediately before entering the FCIP. Competitive civil service status may be granted to career interns who successfully complete their internships and meet all qualification, suitability, and performance requirements.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT: _____

DATE: _____

CC: Mentor
Corporate Intern Coordinator (HR Office)
Supervisor

APPENDIX G

MENTOR AGREEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

I hereby agree to participate for a period of 24 months as a mentor to _____ while he/she participates in the Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP). I am willing to:

1. Devote a reasonable amount of time to help in the career development of the above intern
2. Help the participant create their Individual Development Plan and update it with each rotation
3. Recommend quality-training classes, rotations, shadowing, or temporary assignments
4. Consider and act upon what is best for the participant's career development
5. Prepare 360-degree evaluations of the participant and the FCIP as requested
6. Prepare letters of recommendation, as requested
7. Attend mentor related training, as requested
8. Communicate with Field/Detail Supervisor on a regular basis
9. Provide a debriefing of the participant's performance at the conclusion of each rotational assignment

I understand that I may be released from this agreement if the participant or I decide this is not a productive arrangement. In this event, a confidential "Lessons Learned" evaluation will be prepared by the terminating party for submission to the Corporate Intern Coordinator (HR Office)

SIGNATURE OF MENTOR: _____

DATE: _____

CC: Corporate Intern Coordinator (HR Office)
Field/Program Office
Supervisor

APPENDIX H

IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR AGREEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

I hereby agree to participate for a period of 24 months as a supervisor to _____ while he/she participates in the Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP). I am willing to:

1. Assign quality work/responsibility to the participant
2. Recommend and facilitate rotations that will help the participant develop in areas productive to the participant and field/program office
3. Allow the participant to rotate to different areas within the DOE complex (including area offices)
4. Approve the training listed in the participant's Individual Development Plan whenever practical
5. Assign On-the-Job and formal/informal training
6. Review quarterly reports
7. Prepare letters of recommendation as requested
8. Communicate on a regular basis
9. Coach and council the participant at the conclusion of each rotational assignment

I understand that I have a responsibility to provide an atmosphere that is conducive to open and honest communication.

SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISOR: _____

DATE: _____

CC: Mentor
Corporate Intern Coordinator
Supervisor

APPENDIX I

DETAIL/ROTATIONAL SUPERVISOR AGREEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

I hereby agree to participate for a period of _____ months as a supervisor to _____ while he/she participates in the Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP). I am willing to:

1. Assign quality work/responsibility to the participant
2. Recommend and facilitate rotations that will help the participant develop in areas productive to the participant and field/program office
3. Recommend training and assignment plans whenever practical
4. Allow time for On-the-Job and formal/informal training
5. Review quarterly reports
6. Prepare letters of recommendation as requested
7. Communicate on a regular basis with the participant, field/program office supervisor, and mentor
8. Coach and counsel the participant throughout the rotational assignment

I understand that I have a responsibility to provide an atmosphere that is conducive to open and honest communication.

SIGNATURE OF DEATIL/ROTATIONAL SUPERVISOR: _____

DATE: _____

CC: Mentor
Corporate Intern Coordinator (HR Office)
Supervisor

APPENDIX J

DEVELOPMENTAL ASSIGNMENT CONTRACT INFORMATION

1. Participation information:

Name:

Organization:

Address:

Telephone number:

2. Assignment position and location:

Agency:

Address:

E-mail address and telephone number:

Host supervisor:

3. Assignment period:

Beginning date:

Ending date:

Vacation period:

Training period:

4. Overview of the host organization: (include the organization's primary mission and tasks)

5. Overview of program assignment duties:

6. Assignment objectives:

7. Describe how the assignment will expose the participant to technical and business experiences that will further address the competency areas identified in the IDP.

Flexibility clause: If the evaluation of the participant's progress dictates change, the assignment objectives may be modified. If the assignment plan does not provide facilities and the opportunity to achieve the participant's objectives, the developmental assignment may be terminated with mutual consent.

Approval signatures:

PARTICIPANT:

DATE:

PERMANENT SUPERVISOR:

DATE:

HOST ASSIGNMENT SUPERVISOR:

DATE:

FIELD/PROGRAM OFFICE CORPORATE INTERN COORDINATOR:

DATE:

NOTE: Return a copy of each approved developmental assignment contract to the Corporate Intern Coordinator prior to beginning of the assignment. Vacation and training periods are not considered part of the rotational assignment.

APPENDIX K

CERTIFICATION OF DEVELOPMENTAL ASSIGNMENT

Instructions: To be completed by the host supervisor upon completion of the assignment. Once the assignment is completed, a copy of this certification must be submitted to the Corporate Intern Coordinator in the Human Resources Office.

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT:

ASSIGNMENT:

(AGENCY/COMPONENT/CITY):

START DATE: _____

COMPLETION DATE: _____

Provide a brief evaluation of the experiences and insights the participant gained from this developmental assignment. Describe the assignment's benefits: 1) What can the participant do differently; and 2) How did this assignment change the technical and/or business behaviors of the participant.

What recommendations, if any, would you make for future FCIP participants seeking developmental assignments?

Other comments:

SIGNATURE OF THE HOST SUPERVISOR: _____

DATE: _____

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

APPENDIX L – PMF JOB ANNOUNCEMENT FORM

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Position Title | |
| Projected Number of Positions | |
| Location(s) | Washington, DC |
| Contact Information | <p>Name of HQ PMF Program Manager</p> <p>Phone:</p> <p>Fax:</p> <p>Email:</p> <hr/> <p>Program office POC</p> <p>Phone:</p> <p>Fax:</p> <p>Email:</p> |

Description of Position

Please limit your description to 20 lines. Be sure to list specific skills and competencies for the position. You may want to include 4-6 lines on the mission of your office. Information on how to apply for this position does not need to be entered with the description.

*Job Type (you may select more than one category)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting/Finance/Budget/Economics | <input type="checkbox"/> International Affairs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal, Investigative, Law Enforcement, and Safety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical and Health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering/Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical and Biological Sciences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sciences/Natural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Procurement/Contracts/Grants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources/Labor Relations/Employee Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Science and Welfare |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |

Background Investigation Requirement:

- ☒ SF 85 -- Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions
- ☐ SF 85P -- Questionnaire for Public Trust Positions
- ☐ SF 86 -- Questionnaire for National Security Positions
- ☐ Agency-specific Form/Other

FEDERAL INTERN PROGRAMS

APPENDIX M – ERB CERTIFICATION BOARD SHEET SAMPLE

| Initiation | | Class, Processing, & ERB | Announcement | | Quals & Panel | Selection | | Total Days from Vacancy to ERB |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|-----|--|
| Vac 4/2005 | To HR 5/2005 | Completed 7/2005 | Open 3/2005 | Close 12/2005 | Completed n/a | Mgmt 7/2005 | ERB | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

EXECUTIVE RESOURCES BOARD DECISION DOCUMENT

ORGANIZATION:

REQUESTED ACTION: Noncompetitively Convert to a Permanent Career Conditional Appointment as _____

POSITION FROM: Excepted Service Position of Presidential Management Fellow
current grade level, step level, and salary

NAME:

RECOMMENDED PAY: *proposed grade level, step level, and salary*

BACKGROUND: Request approval to noncompetitively convert name of candidate to the permanent career conditional appointment of name of candidate. Some of his/her duties include: *(list duties)* Name of Candidate entered DOE under the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) program, which did not require ERB approval prior to conversion to a permanent career conditional position. Under the PMF's guidelines, name of candidate has met the requirements for conversion. Mr/s. _____ exceeded the PMF's requirement of completing at least 80 hours of training each year. Also, in accordance with her IDP, she completed a developmental/rotational assignment at the NAME OF ASSIGNMENT SITE. She/He has received *(level of performance rating)* ratings from _____ and the DEVELOPMENTAL ASSIGNMENT SITE Treasury on his/her performance. NAME OF HOME ORGANIZATION _____ management concurs with this request.

RECRUITMENT EFFORTS: N/A

ISSUES/SENSITIVITY: None

CONCUR: _____
Departmental Head

Date _____

CONCUR: _____
Under-Secretary *(if applicable)*

Date _____

APPROVE _____

DISAPPROVE _____

Chair, Executive Resources Board
Department of Energy

Date

APPENDIX N – REFERENCE CHECK SHEET

REFERENCE CHECK SHEET

For all SES, SL, ST, EJ, EK, PMF Actions

Name of Candidate: _____

Names of Reference Verifier: _____

Position Being Considered For: _____

| Name of Reference Contact | Title & Organization | Date | Pertinent Information |
|---------------------------|----------------------|------|-----------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Guidance on Conducting Reference Checks:

- Each action must include at least 3 references and at least half must be from non-DOE personnel.
- The group of reference checks must be made by two or more individuals. (Only one person needs to check each reference.)
- This form, or similar documentation, must be included in the ERB package before the action will be considered.